



picture of the Author.



Wryght is that man whiche  
dothe the wōrke of god  
neglygently. This is  
wryghten in the xviii. cha-  
pitre of the prophet Miche  
temye. God whose mai-  
estic is incomparable / despiseth hym  
that is vndeoute in his seruice / he ab-  
horreth the sluggard / he despiseth the  
wyched and the negligent/more ouer it  
the prynces of this wōrlde loke for to be  
scrud with due tenuitie & attendance /  
howe moch more then by the lorde of  
all thynges whose maiestic surely is in-  
spite) wyl / commauande And require  
that we shall serue hym with most prin-  
cipall diligence. The Apostle therfore  
ghwert vs monicid sayeng in this wyse  
Let vs serue god with feare & diligence  
And in another place he exhortyth vs in  
this wyse. Laboure for your saluation  
with feare / awe / and dread / for surely  
those thre thynges do cause diligencie/  
they induce vs vnto spirituall circum-  
spectiōn and distroy all neglygence ac-  
cordyng vnto the sayenge of scripture:  
which is this. Let vs always walke cir-  
culerly before god euermore fearyng.  
lest we

The preface

lest we in any wyse do offend the presence of the almighty which preserveth all thynges. And lyke as fere of god mouyth mannes mynde for to eschewe peryl, even so the feare of god causyth vs to be circumspect in eschewyng synne. Therefore as it is wryten in the boke of Ecclesiasticus/he that is without feare maye not be iustifyed. And Salomon sayth. The feare of god is a well of lyfe/ for to auoyde the tuyne of death whiche also sayth in another place/he that feareth god is neglygent in nothyng. Undoubtedly this detestable negligence whiche deseruyth malediction and ever-lasting dampnacion/is most repugnaunt and contrarie vnto holsome sollicitude/ and vertuous diligence. Heyng therfore that the feare of god ingendryth diligence/it must nedys folowe that a man fearyng god shall in nothyng be neglygent / it is not without cause therfore that David the maker of psalms sayd/ feare ye god all that he his sayntes/for they that feare hym shal want nothyng which texte is to be understanden of no bondynesse or scrupule feare / but of such feare as a chylde hath of his father. Heynge therfore that the feare of god is so necces-

A. II. necessa-

The preface.

necessity and holosome/we are wel wae  
and in al the holy scripture/for to do all  
our workes hauyng before our eyen the  
face of god/in so much that our laudes  
wherby we praysle hym/and our glorie  
wherby we reioysed in hym/ought to  
be ioyned and have a sent of this godly  
feare/wherupon this holy prophete saþtþ  
Herue ye the lord be with stare/þ reioyse  
in hym with dread./ And recaynly to  
serue god after this falleþ on us a spea  
cyall gyfte of his grace/accordyng vna  
to the sayenge of Job/ from the north  
comþt gold/and from god comþt the  
lymoious or fearful praysing/for syns  
that all our ryghtuousnes/ (as the pro  
phete than wytnesseþ) is in the syghte  
of god/but a ragge of a woman vnpur  
tified/and syns that in all our other ac  
tes and doynges there happen many dis  
fraccions and defautes/ ought we not  
then to be always circumspetþ/ware/  
diligent/and fearefull/lest cuyn in doing  
our good workes/we offendre our lordes/  
and be reproued of that ryghtnos and  
dreadfull iuge/for lyke as þe holy abbot  
Agathon said. If god shuld lay agaynt  
our manyfolde negligencie & defautes/  
that we happen to incurre whylest we  
are

The preface.

are prayeng / undoubtly we coulde  
be saued. wherfore let vs endeouour oure  
selues with our hole power for to eschew  
this detestable negligencie in all our vi  
uine seruyce / wherupon fyer Thomas  
in the. lvi. question of his worke affir  
meth that negligencie is the leuyng of  
due and conuenient busynes / and is di  
rectely repugnaunt and contrarie vnto  
spirituall and vertuos diligence. And by  
hewyse as diligence is a spetçall poynt  
of wisedom / evn so is negligencie the  
chesse poynte of folysenes / for as saynþ  
Isodore saynþ. Negligens. i. non eliges  
And so is he þ<sup>e</sup> taketh none hede what  
is good nor what is euill / therfore lyke  
as the takyng hede & chusynge of those  
thynges that are mete and necessarye  
for a good purpose / is an ayde of a wyse  
man / so the leuyng of and refusynge of  
such thynges is very negligencie / which  
is an acte of a sole / and comyth for lacke  
of good aduysement and discretion / for  
if a man wolde inwardlye considre the  
authorite and worthynes of goddes  
hyghe commaundement and his moste  
breadfull and ryghtuous iugemente /

A. iii. and

The preface.

and there with all his rewarde and joye  
of them that obey hym / and the torment  
es and paynes of them that bysober  
hym / he shulde for thewth begynne to  
tremble / to shoure negligence / and fys-  
mally to do the wroke of god with all dy-  
ligence. Notwithstandyng S. Gregorie  
wryteth that Securite is the mother of  
negligence. But yet there is a good Se-  
curite whiche procedeth from a good and  
a pure conscience wherof Salomon bes-  
ryth wryttes in the xv. chappyte of his  
proverbys sayeng. An assured mynde is  
as it were a continuall feste. There is  
another maner of Securite that is per-  
tyldous and comþþ by reason of errour  
and lacke of aduysement or consideracioþ.  
And that is where a man takyth no heede  
of hymselfe when he is in ioperdy / ne  
remembryþþ how he walketh i the myd-  
des of the deuylls calthrop and snates  
nor that he offendyth god grecuously ma-  
ny wayes / nor carþþ not whyþþer he  
deserue loue or hate / whyþþer he be pre-  
destinate and reproued / whyþþer he shal  
be sauyd or euerlastyngly condemnyd /  
of the which most dampnable and dan-  
gerous Securite it is mentioned in the  
Eccles. 7. vii. chapitre of Ecclesiastes in this wyse  
There

### The prefacē

There be of the wyched sorte that be as  
presumptuous as if they had wroughte  
tristely. So that this presumption and  
also negligēnce growe and spryngē ouſt  
of one rote / and so it maketh no great  
mariſter though one synne haue his boſ  
gyuningge of diuersē. Let vs therefore be  
verily wyſe/diligent / carefull / and circuſ-  
cumspecte / as creatures hauyng eyes  
on eueri syde. And let vs ſet ouſ hautes  
upon oure tourney lyke as the prophecie  
Aggeus monyfhereth vs / that we tourne  
not into the waye of synne/leſt we ſone  
after fall into the tormentys of hell. And  
let vs ponder and and fulfull the ſaying  
of the ſcripturē which is this: Blyſſed is  
that man that is alway ſafefull / for I  
haue ſearyd god lyke as I wold waups  
of the ſea ragyng upon me. wherupon  
holy Job ſaþt these wordes. when I  
remembre god I am ſtrucken with feare  
And also I was tymorous in all my  
workeſ lordē / for I knowe that thou  
wylt ſpare / when I offendē / for a wyſe  
man caſtyth the wroſt in all thyngē/beca-  
uſe he is uncertayn and in doute why  
theſe his actes do proceſſe of charite/and  
whither he please god or not And for as  
moch as it is a dreadfull thyng to fall

A.iii. into

The prefacce

into the handes of the iuyng god / the  
whiche is terrible in his iudgements  
upon the sonnes of men wherof also we  
are overlayne and ignorant what he  
hath determined of vs in the secreteis of  
his preiscience or knowledge / and finally  
what shall becom of vs: let vs then ( all  
negligence layed a part ) studie to serue  
 hym always with feare and reverencie /  
and so doyng we may be sure to trusse  
on the best / but if we do our worke neg-  
lygently / we shall peryshe with those of  
whom the pphete speaketh. They that  
swarve from thy commaundementes  
shall peryshe. These thynges I haue  
touched breifly of the feare of god / and  
eschewyng negligence because in this  
worke folowyng I do intende specially  
to intreate of certayne mattiers concer-  
nyng the good educcation and iuyng  
of religiouse persones or regulars / that  
is to wyte of such as are bounde to any  
rule or ordre certayns / the state of whō  
( alas the more ppte ) is fallen to great  
tuyne and decaye / ye and in maner bus  
to extreme misordre / neuertheles amōg  
them there are many good men that  
with the bread of god are mouyd unto  
perysche liuyng. Amōg whom also there  
are

The prefacet

are manye that I loue tendly / the  
whiche haue ostentynes disclosyd b  
to me the charite of theyr hartes / for  
whose sayys I haue wryten this  
boke / wherfore (by the grace  
and helpe of god) I shall  
touche this mattter  
as groundly and  
as substan  
cially as  
I can  
possy  
ble.



The Tab.

¶ Here followeth a table of the articles  
conteyned in the treatise folowyng.

**C** Of the originall institution & spalte  
begynning of religioun or regulars per-  
sones. **The iij. article.**

A confirmation of thynges touched in  
the fyre article / by the wordes of holy  
fathers & why ministris of the churche  
are called clerkes. And wherfore they  
lyuynges be gyuen them. And whyther  
they maye lawfulli haue propertie in  
goodes or no. **The. ii. article.**

**C** So; what consideracion all religioun  
persones and clerkes / are principally  
bounde to lyue veridously/guyng good  
example in chaste and humilitie.

**The. iii. article.**

**C** Of such thynges as regulars or re-  
ligioun men / and clerkes are specially  
bounden to obserue. **The. iii. article.**

**C** Why clerkes and regulars ought to  
wyre no weapon neither to sygbe / nor  
use to set or tyraine thoyr bret / nor yet  
to be bluders. **The. v. article.**

**C** So; what cause regulars are bound  
especially to folow chaste of body / and  
clennes of mynd / & therfore they ought  
not to haunt the clostres of nonnes /  
nor

The Table.

not ente in to theyr houses.

The. vi. article.

C Of sobrynes to be obseruyd of regu-  
lars and of all surer rysot or dronkennes  
to be of them auoyded. The. vii. article.

C Howe it is prohibyty to all clerkes &  
ministres of the churche to occupye any  
marchaundyst/or to exercyse any tem-  
porall offyces or cheuyshance.

The. viii. article.

C For what cause clerkes regulars and  
other constituti in holy ordres ought to  
retayn from mynstrelles/ Jesters/and  
byssardes/tawerns/and cheþhe play of  
cardes and dyses.

The. ix. article.

C An instruction of divers holsom con-  
sideracions / wherby we may perceyue  
that all christen people/especially minis-  
tres of the churche are bound to dispise  
all vanite and superfluite of plapes/dis-  
portes/and oþre bayne delectacions.

The. x. article.

C Of conuenient appayzell for myn-  
stres of the churche/ especially of regu-  
lars and of theyr manyfolde excesse in  
garmentes/ and of the desprie therof to  
be auoyded.

The. xi. article.

C That in nowylse women may dwelle  
with regulars or mynstryes of þe churche

cons-

constitute in holy ordres/except they be  
very olde & neare of kynged. The. xxiiij. article.  
**C** That chaffite of body and cleenes of  
herte do principally becomme prestes and  
regulars. The. xviii. article.  
**C** Of the petyll and improuidence of  
prestes and regulars dwellynge with  
woment gatheryd out of the sayenges  
of many noble men. The. xxiij. articles.  
**C** Of the same mattier it apperþ in  
the reuelacions of S. Kateryne the  
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**C** That regulars & all men constitute  
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and holy gatheryd out of the sayeng of  
holyn Dionisius. The. xvi. article.  
**C** Of the qualite of regulars gatheryd  
out of the sayenges of S. Bernard.  
The. viii. article.  
**C** Of the most straunge and terrible iud-  
gement of god upon clerkes had out of  
the wordes of gloriouse saynt Bernard.  
The. xviii. article.  
**C** Howe they ought to pray/syng/and  
say the service of almyghty god. The. xix. article.  
**C** Whether descante may be commenda-  
ble in duriue service/ & of certayne thyn-  
ges which ought to be eschewyd in song.  
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**C**Agayntis some that wolde be exen-  
syd from the obseruance of such thynges  
as regulars are specially bound to  
do sayng that the dignite of the church  
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ben vsyd in tymes passyd. The. xxi. art.

**C**Of the daungeris that is in pluralite  
of benefices. The. xxii. article.

**C**Howe prestes and soch as are of the  
clergye are bounde to keþe hospitalite.  
The. xxiii. article.

**C**whyþer religiouse and spiritual per-  
sones that are able to fynde themselves  
of theyr owne patrimonye and sub-  
staunce / maye lawfully conuerte the  
goodes of the churche unto theyr owne  
uses. The. xxiii. article.

**C**what maner of man a prelate/dean/  
or a hed and ruler of religiouse folke /  
ought to be. The. xxv. article.

**C**Agapust pypde & excessi in buyldynge  
The. xxvi. article.

**C**Of certayne auncient lawes for the  
adaultyng of pluralites of benefyce/nes  
the which no dispensaciō is admittable  
as moche as conteruyth the naturall  
lawe of them. The. xxvii. article.

**C**An exhortation unto all clerkes & re-  
ligiouse men. The. xxviii. article.

**C**Thus endyth the Table.

### The lyfe

¶ Of the originall institution and  
lyste begynnyng of certe-  
gious / and reguler  
perfones.

### The fyfte article.

**T**he holy euāgelist Luke in the forth chapter of the Actes of the Apostles declarith / howe in the fyfte begynnyng of the churche ( the holy gōd beyng sent from above ) the univerall congregacion of saythfull people in Iherusalem dyde lyue in comen-  
dayng no properte in any thyngē. In  
those dayes substance was denyed to  
every man according to theyr necessite  
the which lyfe endured among them so  
long as the blissted Apostles were they  
and tylid them as saythfull people / yet  
surely whan the Apostles with that de-  
vote James the less ( at that tyme he  
yngē president of the church ) were from  
them departed / yet notwithstanding  
that most devote and seruent lywage  
in comen for a certayne space endured.  
But after what beleuers in Chrysostom  
saythe beganne to enteasse thowzuge  
out

of prelles.

out all Italy / Sarvice / and France / so  
many thousandes began to be regne-  
cate in Christ / than could not that iuste  
in comyn be well obserued of all men .  
The great feruour also of theys spirit de-  
votion began to banyshe alwayes . And  
the hotenes of the bloud of our sauour  
Christ began in pcelle of tyme to ware  
colde in the hertes of the moxe parte of  
men . In so much that the most parte of  
such faythfull people that were conuer-  
tyd of the Jewes as of the pagans  
to obtrygne a properte in goodes to be  
contentyd to be obedient unto theys mas-  
ters . But for all that many callynge to  
theys remembraunce theys spirit devo-  
tion and conuersacion / beynge inflampyd  
by the inspyrare operation of the holy  
ghost above / with a great hote and fer-  
uent loue of perfectio and pouerke / toke  
Upon them agapne that indifferent lyfe  
is comen . And ferther they dyd renewe  
the institucions of the Apostles / in the  
whiche to the entente they myght the  
more freely and spedely procede / they se-  
ueryd themselfe from the other fayth-  
full people of god / and began to inha-  
bite in suburbes and other secrete and  
solitary places / luyng not onely in  
comen

¶

communideth they; remembrance / bise and  
aduertisunge from mariage corporally  
solahyng they; patentes and hymnes  
folke/ledyng they; lups under holy obte  
nition according to the godly counsell  
of our Saviour Christ. After which eas  
on the religious lyfe had his spes  
prentisunge / as Calmannus out of the  
scriptures of a certayn Abbot/callyd psalm  
mon in the secound volume of collatioris  
the whiche is large. And as the same mad  
saymewhile in the secounde booke of the  
rule of holy fathers dwelle in Morand  
dñe certayne leidompholyd regulare pers  
sonis were institute and obteyned by the  
holy euangelist Matthe/which dyd not  
only fute after the institucions of the  
Apostles in comyn/but they addyd ther  
unto moche more and hyer deuotion as  
affiniter with oþerre colde hard spes  
full lyfe encomore gyuen to prayere and  
contemplacion. In so moche that wylle  
the Jewes as paynmyngs dyd metunye  
therat. They were also so intellamely  
gyuen boþe nygdt and day to redyng  
and also to hande labour that somtyme  
the secound or thysde day the appedyng  
of meate came in they; remembrance.  
Furthermore that thyng that holy Je  
wes

of parishes.

come in the boke of nobis men shewyth  
þ agreyth with the same saynges thus.  
The euangelist Marke the fyrd prea-  
cher of the fayth of Christ vnto the peo-  
ple of Hierusalem / dyd institute and or-  
wyne a churche there wher so gret let-  
nyng and chaunce of lyfe was to the ex-  
tent that he myght priouoke the brider-  
sall folowres of Christe to his example.  
And further he sayd þt Philo the moche  
eloquent of the Jewes which occupied  
hymselfe in the prayse and laude of our  
faythfull people as it appertyd in the  
boke that he wrote of the fyrd churche  
as the euangelist Marke at the cyte of  
Hierusalem he assaymyd also that such  
christen beleuers were not only therre  
but also in many other prouynces / cal-  
lyng theyr houses and mansion places/  
monasteries / wherby it appertyth that  
such was the church of þt fyrd beleuers  
in Christe which we call now monkes.  
And such as the holy euangeliste Luke  
both reherce that were fyrd beleuers in  
Ierusalem. Also the same þt Philo made  
a certayne boke of the lyfe contempla-  
tione wherin he sayth / that the fyrd dis-  
ciples of the euangeliste Marke were  
gret gauen to contemplacion & prayer.

B. fute

The lyfe

Furthermore of the reauch of this mate-  
ter / þe shall haue moche certayne / tol-  
lege of the instructions of holy Dionisius  
in his booke Ecclesiasticis hierarchias  
For therre the same holy man descriþeth  
howe the maner and appayled custome  
of conseruation of monkes in the tyme  
of the Apostles / and syrke studiation  
of the churche was very deuouice. More-  
over such as steryd themselfe from  
the compaiane of faythfull people that  
obreyed properte of goddes ben occupi-  
ed into two kyndes . For some long  
Upon them the professioun of religiouse  
and solitarie lyfe. And some sturyd com-  
panyd among secular men / byd hum-  
ble securte unto to the congregacion in  
the churche / lyuyngc vnder the gouer-  
nance of holy bishopes. For why the  
deuoute bishops that were at that tyme  
callyd and tyned unto them deuouts  
faythfull and sturyd people that were  
they houelde seruauntes or such well-  
disposed persones / as were dwellynge  
nyght to they houes / & suche as lade  
that holy lyfe in comyn / accordinge to  
the instructions of the Apostles before  
reherred with many deuoute addicions  
and obseruance / whiche to them were  
shewyd

of p[re]lates

Melind[er] by h[oly] b[ishop] whose clerkes  
they were . And offised themselves  
the laudes & god as b[ishop]es b[ishop] / op[er]e  
lynge at mydryght or lone after duely  
to celebrete theyr diuine scripture / that  
sught to be done in the nyght and eke  
in the mornyng . Notwithstandyng  
they dyd not make that solomne bowes  
which be requisite to every religiouse monkes  
do now adapes . For why they  
seme to be but the sprynges and begyn-  
nes of the lyfe and callynge of regulares  
which whatt it chalisyde that they could  
not all inhabite with h[oly] b[ishop]es / &  
they were distributed into other deuout  
places that be calyd colleges beyng vnder  
the gouernaunce of b[ishop]es / and  
hauyng a meane tylle calyd a deanes  
which places also were namp[ed] monas-  
teries / and had in them one fraytor  
and one dortour . They were at that  
yme diligenty gauen to diuyne obser-  
uaunce and obediance / bitterly auoy-  
dyng all poyntes of vncleunes and in-  
contynencie . wherupon Pope Cle-  
ment in his fourthe Epystle wrote  
vnto his well belouyd bretherne and  
vnto his scholy felowys of Ierusalem

B. ii. dwellyng

The lyfe

dwellynge to gether with his brother  
louryd brother and bishop after thi- man  
ner folowyng. Clement the bishop sen-  
dyth you greynge, &c. A lypain comyn-  
to all men / and especyally to clerkes is  
very necessary. And principally to them  
that desyre to be militaunt in the churche  
of god without rebuke or shame. And  
such as do coueyte to folowe the lyfe of  
the Apostles and theyr disciples. And  
for this cause we commaunde you to  
folowe and obey theyr doctrine and ex-  
ample. Furthermore for this purpose  
saint Jerome sayd vnto one Nepotian/  
as hereafter folowyth. A clerke he saith  
ought so to behauie hymselfe / that god  
may bothe possesse hym. And that he  
may possesse god. And in so muche that  
it is wryten. God is my part / he ought  
to possesse nothing but god onely. wher-  
fore if he possesse any thyng besydes  
god he shall not haue his part with god  
as for example. If a man possesse gold  
syluer/possessions / or other householde  
stuffe / it behouyth not y<sup>t</sup> our lord shuld  
be comparyd to suche partes. Of this  
matter in lyke maner in the. xi. chap-  
tre of the decrees more evidently it ap-  
peryth / wherupon therof wryteth sayn<sup>t</sup>

Jerome

of presches.

**J**erome agayne sayeng thus. There be two kyndes & maners of Christen people / wherof one is that maner of people that be onely set and applyed to dwine seruyce and gyuen to contemplacion & prayer and suche an hynck is most convenient to retrayns from the trebylous encumberaunce of temporall and wordly thynges / as clerkes and other deuoute and dedicaute people to god which being contentyd with a pore and symple lyuyng / bothe of sustynaunce and also cloþyng hauynge no properte of goodes amonge them / but vsyng all thynge in comen.

**C**hereafter folowyth the confirmation of the foressayd lyfe in comen out of sayenges of holy fathers and why they be callyd clerkes. And wherfore they haue stipendes gyuen to them to fynd them. And whether they may lawfully haue properties of goodes or no,

The seconde article.

**T**he holy doctour and prieate Ildorius in the seuenth booke of his Ethymologyes dyscussyth this worde clerke in this maner of wylle. I suppose that it is callyd clergye / and that they be callyd clerkys / because **S.**  
**B.iii. Mathie**

**M**attheie which was spylle ordeyned by  
the Apo<sup>l</sup>ostol Icam and wa<sup>n</sup>decre<sup>t</sup>e<sup>r</sup> to his dignite<sup>t</sup> by easynge of idlyps / iyns  
whiche dyn<sup>g</sup> persones without holy or-  
dres haue by tallyd Clerkes / in Englysh  
Clerkys (and who say ih) men tallyd v<sup>t</sup>  
to spirituall dignite<sup>t</sup> by the lotte of god-  
des w<sup>t</sup>is / for that w<sup>t</sup>ide w<sup>t</sup>is is as  
moch<sup>ly</sup> to say in Englysh as w<sup>t</sup>id of he-  
ritage. Had therfore they are tallyd cler-  
kes by clokys / by cause they are of the  
lot g<sup>o</sup>od inheritance of god / v<sup>t</sup> is by cause  
they haue god to they<sup>t</sup> lot g<sup>o</sup> inheritance  
v<sup>t</sup> by cause god hath his lot g<sup>o</sup> inheritance  
in them. But generally all such are cal-  
lyd clerkys that ministe<sup>r</sup> & do seruice in  
the churche of Christ / whose names & de-  
grees be such . Benedict / colet / subdecan /  
deacon / pellier / bishop / And furthermore  
as **H**erodianus w<sup>t</sup>ynghyth the degrees  
of the h<sup>o</sup>ly and lower sorte of prestes in  
the newe testamet toke his begynnyng  
immediatly from Christ / whiche syntre  
ordeyned the . xii . Apostles as chyche &  
byeghe<sup>r</sup> prestes. And the threcole and  
xii . discipules as lower prestes . But he  
chose the blesyd p<sup>re</sup>c<sup>t</sup>er to be his princi-  
piall and h<sup>o</sup>ly preste. In so moch as he  
delyueryd unto hym the keys of the  
kyngdom of heuyn for al them & byf ore  
all them . And Christ of hymselfe beyng

callid Petra (whiche is a very stony or  
rocke) gaue unto hym the name of pet-  
er. The apostles folowyng the same  
fashyon / in euerie cyte ordyned bothe  
priestes & bishopes. Also we rede & fynd  
that the decanes were ordyned by the  
apostles. But other iurisdictiōnes ordyned  
benched/colled/ subdeane & other / in pro-  
cessiōne of tyme were institute by y<sup>e</sup> church  
wherupon as Symundus/ Iohannes/  
Christus/ and other do testyfie temporall  
goodes & possessions were therfore by the  
lay people gyuen vnto the church / & that  
forbyt ause that secular men haue no le-  
sion to cogyd and cvermote apply them  
selve to prayer & dwyne struyce/ they be-  
yng many tyme & clerkes of the church/  
shuld supply p[ri]stimes of the lay people  
in prayeng/ unpayting/ & satisfyng for  
them by whose almytete/ a reward they  
be founde & upholden/ but now in cōclusiōne  
as it dyd apperte/ not onely in the  
tyme of the fyrst beginnynge of y<sup>e</sup> churche  
but also many yeres afterward/ that pre-  
stes & regulars myght in no wylle haue  
propeitie of goodes/ but vsyd theselve to  
one staykour & one doroure/ which after-  
ward by despensaciōne or otherwyse was  
chasyd after/ such tyme as the church  
tol to leye moste lamentable greatly be-  
wraying curye & decay both in the hede

The lyfe of the churche  
and also in the members of the churche.  
We which we have great neede to pray  
to almighty god / that he of his goodes  
wolde wouchesauke to restore unto the  
wolde moste laudable ordre and maner.  
For whyn / hyswe many a maner of abbo-  
dwynable vices do and dely. Wyllyng  
and spryng by the reason of the lacke of  
lyuyng in comen/in one steyntour / and  
one boxtour / it is more evidently shewyd  
by experiance / than any tonge can ex-  
presse.

**C.** For what cause regulars are bound  
to lyue very securously full of good ex-  
ample chast and meke.

**T**he as the law of the gospell was  
to vs deliueryd by the only begotte  
sonne of god / the lawe of charites  
verte / the lawe also of all perfection/  
teachynge vs to despysse and contempne  
all fleshely and worldly thynges & only  
to be affecyonate & evermore despyssous  
of spirituall/godly / and heuenly thynges/  
incessantly gyue to the euangelisynge  
and immutabile god with a pure and  
scrutent harte and mynde. Wynn so all  
christe people especially about aliother  
nations in the worlde ought to be char-  
itable

of prestes &c

table / mercyfull / ghostly / holy / full of  
good example / patient / meke / chaste / so-  
bre and perfect / and otherwyse they are  
not worthy to be callyd the churche peo-  
ple of Christ. It is not sufficient for the  
to folowe Christe by fayth onely / but it  
is very necessary to the heith & holsome  
callynge of a churche man to folowe his  
lorde god Iesus Christe / by the due ob-  
seruance of his commaundementes by  
exercys of vertue / and by suche maner  
of lyfe as shall please god. As our lorde  
and sauour hymselfe knowledgyth /  
sayenge thus. wherfore say ye unto me  
lorde / lorde / dognynot that thyng that  
I commaunde you / whereby it may be  
perceyved that who so euer transgres-  
synth the preceptes of god / banyly gyn-  
worthyly namyth hym lorde . For the  
same purpose thus he sayeth agayne .  
Every man that sayeth unto me lorde /  
lord / shall not entre into the kyngdoyme  
of heuen / but he that dothe the wyl of  
my fader that is in heuen . Also he saith  
agayne in this maner . They that be  
the people of Christ that is to say per-  
teygynng to Christ as his true serua-  
tes and ministres haue mortifyed and  
ponyshed theyr fleshe with abstinence

B. v. from

The lypse

from vice and concupisence. Therefore  
christen men are bound to lyue after the  
sayng of Christe / that is to lyue / to  
embrace and folowe christ in all charite  
humylte / patience / sobernes / and chaste  
tute / so as they be callyd christen men  
the more to ther damnacion . And for  
that cause the apostle Iohn saþ in  
this booke / who also saþ that he lyues  
wyrme in Christe / hym behoueth to  
walk as Christ walkyd. Besyde this /  
have I heretly / holily and purely a man  
ough nobry / and sture god / it is cleare  
in especiall by the sayeng of the Apostol  
Iames / he wrygþ thus / who so evir hath  
folysched and performed all the lawes of  
god / but in one pornte he is iudged  
guylde in the bwe / Behold therfore how  
nacord the way of helth is / wher for one  
wordes we suffer eternall damnacion .  
And as the trewhly wytnessyth / he that  
callyth his brother soule / shal be gylde  
of the paynes of hell . In lykewyse he  
that shal and ryghtone of these monkes  
recepwyse the horriblie tormentes of  
hell / the same lordes opinion . And also  
he that offendyd one of the lytel ones  
that beleuen in men / it is requisite that  
a myslone be hanged about his necke /  
and

opinione

and ther be drokynge in the bottome of  
thesel. Wherefore the maker of our lawe  
communly do all men that believe in  
him do so as he sayth hercelfe folowes  
ynge. Loue your enemys / do good unto  
them / for he that hateth you / and pray for the  
that doth persecute and slander you /  
Whos haude shynge is traitry and with  
many other lyke thinges to every dayt  
full chaylde in a maner hermoure the hyre  
in thatt and degrees that a man be / the  
more / and agreable swarde / that his  
charactris to haue so moch the myre is  
he bounde to a vertuouse lyfe for this / The  
more to any man i dogyuen / the more of  
hem is alwyd a gaine / Wherfore who so  
be regulare / he is not onely bounde to  
the preceptes of the lawe in the goswell  
but also to these thynnes  
yes that are especially to regulare custumed / And verly such as be not onely  
regulare / but constitute in any maner  
of holy ordre / are bounde besydes the  
shynges afore reherced / vnto suche  
shynges as is commaunded to all  
them that be constitute in the same  
orde / wherfore if he be a priuate or a  
pastoure / that is to saye a fedre of  
shepe / he shal be bounde to  
all the shynges before reherced

christen

### The fift

christe people wiþ gheoffre fode / in þis  
þe hath taken uppon hym the care and  
charge of soules / thi he is surely bound  
to many more hysper thynges / þat before  
expreslyd conþ / among them þis / saying  
þis / So we sayng therefore it is said / that  
þe ministers of þe churche / and regu  
lars / be þerfore calld / clerches / for þis  
caus þe be especially þe lot / partem  
heritage of god / as þan onely dedica<sup>t</sup>on  
and deputed to dwiue / þat it is  
open to thos / þat they are bounde to  
þose so excellently þt they / inuisible ad  
menciated may not obteyne any right / or  
dominium / of the godly honoures / þis  
þat all tyme / with a substantiall g  
pure / dedicaþ / þey may perteynge to god  
And agayn it is said / þat temporal yeres  
were assygned / by / the lay people / unto  
the clerkes / and regulars / to the entent  
þat they shuld not encloþ / myslf / unto  
almyghty god / for / þeyz alme welthes  
pisteracion / but also in the place and  
stede of the lay people / here / þey shulde  
pray and ministre / and also pacifye and  
reconsyle / þat ryghtwysse iudges / not  
only to hemselfe / but also to them by  
whose stypendes / þey lye / They are  
bounde to reconsyle themselfe / & agayne  
to come

of prestes.

... come & the fauours of god / if somtyme  
they fortune to lese it. And also of ryghts  
they ought to aplie. And intelyfly gyue  
themselfe to the laude of god in theyz  
prayer and scrupce / bothe for them selfe  
and also for theyz sondarys and bene-  
factours . wherby it appertyth holwe  
purely and vertuously they are bounde  
talyue / that by the reason of the fulnes  
of theyz vertue and the abundance of  
theyz mercye they maye helpe & succour  
theyz frendes and neyghbours as well  
onlyfe as ded. Therfore such regular &  
ordinary houres with other prayers /  
laudes / and psalmodyes / wherto they  
are bounde ought of them to be done &  
performed with great diligence. And no  
dought but they ought to behauie them  
selfe as worthy ministres / and men con-  
tentyd to do the scrupce of god / pronow-  
cyng it distinctly solitarilie and deuouc-  
ly . Otherwyse they haue no ryght in  
any goodes or substance of the chur-  
ches / neither in the heritage of Christe /  
nor yet in the sypendes or rewardes of  
the souldiers of god . As the profunde  
leenyd doctour Guiselmus Parisiensis  
as wytnessyth in many places . Ulriens  
also in his boke namyd summa . Ray-  
mundus

三

*Immaculatus/Dicituratus/Immaculatus/*—*which  
be of the same opinion;* & *that  
an angelic creature and a man, who are  
not of the same species,*

**T**hese thynges are specially  
encoynded to regulat. in 1596.  
and 1597. **M**ay. 1. 1597.

**The 1930s: Early Years**

**L**eue as godlynes laptly that celi-  
ties ben amyed by this gecche walle  
vices/which is in Englyshe and  
soyd because they be specially of the lab  
of god/ & god is theri heritage. Myght  
so thereregulatys de tales of these godes  
word/banon/in Elysynge/regularis in Eng-  
lysh a rule. Andis Bratianunce capyd  
it callyd a rule/sayd that that it wroghte  
felicly/no/ it aynþtynge waercyly/ as þe  
as some men sayen/it is callyd a rule  
for that that it fulfylleþ or gowetyngh.  
And therewyth the betty fasshion of lyving  
discretely: or els forþbecause it sholdyngh  
sonderlyþ that thryng that is fulfylleþ dis-  
posyd or out of the way. Ecclesiastes ther-  
fore be namyd regulatys forþbecause they  
be bound to keve theri lyfe dexterly and  
in good rule/and bydyngh all inclinacion  
to vices. And clerly passyng by pathes  
of vertue/ unto blyssydnes/ accordyng  
unto the institutions of holy fachtes to  
them

of prestes.

hem before ordyned. But althowgh  
at the generall counsell / by hyghe bps.  
kipes / doctours / and noble prelates.  
A Jerome / Augustine / Gregory / and  
Isidore many thynges were institute to  
be obserued of the regulars whiche in the  
decree therof made be solvypd and ex-  
plessyd / yet notwithstanding these pre-  
ceptes (as many as be sufficient for our  
purpose) are compendiously gatheryd to  
gether in the begynnyng of the thyside  
boke of decretalles / wherin amonges  
other it is this sayd and commaundyd.  
Clerkes that bee weppn and be vsu-  
ars / let them be excommunicate. If  
any of the clerkes do vse to set theyr bus-  
hes or here / let them be accurst. If any  
of the clerkes do presumptuously haunt  
the monasteryes of nonnes without a  
manyste and reasonable occasion / he shall  
be halde correctyd by the bishop / and  
if he wyll not ceasse / he shall clerly be  
ylsharged of his offyce in the churche.  
Ferther Innocentius the thyside in a  
generall counsell sayd that. To the en-  
tent that both the actes and condicions  
of clerkes maye be better reformyd.  
And that they all may lyue contynent-  
ly and chayly / especially suche as ben  
consti-

### The lyfe

constitute in holy ordres utterly eschew  
yngc byce and voluptuousnes / & that  
they may myniste & serue in the lyghte  
of god with a pure hart and chaste body.  
And to the entente that hope of pardon  
shall not encourage them to offend / we  
ordayne / that who som euer heretofore  
be founken or taken corrupted with  
the vice of incontinencie (as he hath of-  
fendyd more or lesse) so shal he be pony-  
shed accordaninge to the holy regulat or-  
dres / which we commaunde more effectu-  
ally & streythly to be kepte that such  
as the frare of god can not reuoke from  
synne. At the least wylle they may be co-  
pelled to forsake it by temporall pony-  
shement / that is to suspender them from  
theyr offyces / and also to take from the  
theyr benefyces of the church. Further-  
more all clerkes shulde diligently ad-  
steynge from sursettes and dronkenes.  
wherfor they shuld moderatly vse wyne  
And no man shuld be puoked to dynke  
for dronkenes banyshyng a man from  
his wyt and discretion. And also encoar-  
geth a man to the pleasure of the body.  
Therefore we haue decreed that such abu-  
sion must utterly be forsaken / and that  
in all parties they shulde be bounde to

Dynke

of prestes.

byynke after a moderate sallyour. And if any of them in these foresaid thynges be founde culpable ( excepte he be yng of his superiour admonyshed bylbe recon-syled) he shalbe from his offyce and bene-fyce suspelyd. And clerkes shall not ex-ercyse worldly offyces / nor vse mar-chandyse especially such as be vnhonele. They shall not gyue audience to myn-sterilles / Jesters / & dyllarde's. Let them chefely auoyde tauerne / excepte it be in case of necessite / as a man purposyd in a iorney. They may not play at cardes / nor at dyce / nor vse no suche maner of gamys. Theyz crownes mustbe shauen accordyngly. And also they muste dilig-ently exercyse themselve in all offyces of the churche with all other good & ver-tuous studyes. Theyz upper garmentes ought to be close / and not to longe or to shorte. They ought also in nowyse to weare any rede clothe / or grene weltyd scrys / or shewys / brybles / or sades gylt no laces / nor lachettes garnyshed with siluer or golde / nor yet any rynges / ex-cept it be such as be allowyd by dignite of theyz offyce. Also it is commaunded / that no preste kepe any wome by whom he may be suspected. For if any preste /

L. deane/

### The lyfe

deane or subdeane beyng suspectyd of  
fornication with any woman / be atte  
the secounde or thyrd warnynge/sounde  
with her in communicacion/or conuet  
saunt with her in any maner of wyse:  
immediatly after let hym be excommunicate / for women be not permittyd to  
dwelle with clerkes/crept they be suche  
maner of persons/in whom the lawe of  
nature wyl not suffre any defaulte to be  
suspected. Clerkes may vse no playes  
toyes / nor gamynges in the churche.  
The goodes of clerkes shulde be forthe  
in comyn/they shulde eate in one house/  
and slepe vnder one couertynge. Marke  
therfore/how here it is manyfest i what  
good ordre / deuotion / and example the  
lys of regulars somtyme hath byn. And  
how of ryght it ought now to be. Ther  
fore let them be fearefull / and let them  
gyue no confidence to any vnreasonable  
dispensacion/which is the very destruc  
tion of all vertuouse lyuyng. And let  
them take no regarde vnto custome  
lybertye/for that is but a meane to cor  
rupte a perkyte lyfe / and truely very ne  
cessite/or apparaunt profyte is the mos  
ther or originall begynnyng of dispen  
sacion/by whom they; vicious conuet  
sacion

of prestes.

**S**o this is accusyd as hygh and holy byfis  
shopes / led / and Belastus with many  
other princypall doctours doo affirme/  
but nowe consequently / some of these  
thinges shalbe more espcially declared.

**C**why clerkes or regulars ought  
to bere no maner of weapon/  
nor to fyght / nor vse to set  
theyz here / nor yet to  
be blucrs.

The. v. article.

**I**t is conuenient (as it appereth) that all mynisters / cler-  
kes / or regulars of the churche shuld themselfe applye to  
the seruice of god / that is to say / they shuld be gyuen to prayer & con-  
templacib. And to the laude and prayse  
of theyz maker. And to desyre god to be  
mercyfull / as well to them / as to other  
theyz frenydys & neyghbours / by whose  
exhibition and stypendes they are up-  
holden and suskeyned . And seyng that  
the exercycle of warre ( wherein the in-  
quietnes & trouble of mas hart do espe-  
cially remayne ) shuld be a great impediment  
against these good actes to be done /

L.ii. ther-

The lyfe

therfore warre is forbydden them alwey  
as marchaundysse / for that cause they  
ought not to bere wepon/lest they shuld  
be prouokyd to fyght / & least they shulde  
shewe themselfe as men redy to fyght /  
lest they shuld quarell with other men.  
But for all that if they iorney by any  
dangerous places / than may they were  
necessarie weapons to fere theyz ene-  
myes / and themselfe moderately to de-  
fende with harmeles defence / moreouer  
where as regulars are deputed to serue  
the altare / wherin the passion of Christ  
is represented in the sacrament / there is  
good cause why they are prohibyted to  
shed blood / but rather are bound to shed  
theyz owne blood for the loue of Christ  
and ryghtwysnes. Therfore this sayng  
of the Apostle / of them is to be obserwyd  
Hirtrue ye not with wordes / for it is to  
no purpose profitable / but to the sub-  
uision of the herers . Also further he  
sayth thus. If any man be supposed full  
of debate / we and the church of god wyl  
haue no suche compayne . And therfore  
scripture saith. That ma is to be emb-  
dyd / that conuayeth hymselfe from de-  
bate and strye . A id furthermore they  
ought to be armyd with spirituall de-  
fence

of prestes.

terre to plesaunce and resyst agaynst the  
emys of theyz helth. And to such de-  
fence they ought to induce the lase pe-  
ple by theyz example. Of this matter p<sup>c</sup>  
holy father saynt Ambrose / in his boke  
callyd de officis / and also in other pla-  
ces wrote many thynges. In the decree  
also many thinges were induced to this  
purpose. For certaynly it was institute  
at a generall counsell / that what clerke  
so euer had dyed in fyghtyng sholdyng/  
or other games of the gentyles shuld be  
prayed for / nother in oblation / nother  
in any oryson/or prayer / but shulde fall  
into the handes of the iudge / yet not-  
withstanding he shulde be buryed. Also  
it was ordeyned in the counsell of To-  
lytan/that clerkes beryng weapon ryo-  
tously shulde lese the degre of theyz or-  
die / and be hanyshed for euer in to mo-  
nasteryes / lykewylse it is red in the ac-  
tes of the counsell of Melde. That none  
of the clergie shuld take vpon them wea-  
pons of defensē/nother i any wyse shuld  
go armpd/but the name of theyz profes-  
sion they shuld perfourme both with re-  
ligouse maners / & also with religious  
habyte. The whiche thyng if they despy-  
sed / they shulde be grecuously correctyd/

L.iii. as syjt

The lyfe

as fyft to lese theyr proprie degrees / and  
further to be taken as extreme despis-  
ers of the holy canons / and also cursyd  
corrupters of the auctorite of the church  
for they can not serue both god and the  
worlde. Furthermore they ought beter-  
ly to auoyde all worldy glorie / and ge-  
nerall ype all thynges that prouoketh a  
man to incline to the pleasure of the bo-  
dy / with all other wayne curiosites. Let  
rayne preceptis aggryable with the same  
be especially enioyned by the Apostole/  
sayng thus. In no wylle be ye conforma-  
ble to this wylde / but be you resormpd  
with the spirite of discretion wherby he  
meanteth that they oughte to abhorre &  
auoyde the settynge of theyr bushes the  
comlynes of theyr locks the trimmyng  
of theyr here. And chechely theoughnes  
of theyr berdes / in so much that it is pro-  
hibyte that women shulde be atypyd in  
here / and as Albertus wrote vpon Job/  
sayeng thus: Much thynges do prouoke  
concupiscence / for clerches are communi-  
ded to be garnyshed both inwardly and  
outwardly with a vestiment of vertue /  
and also they shuld be inwardly resplen-  
dent and shynynge in good maners / so  
that they myght procede honestly / being  
gouern

gouernyd in all theyr lyght & sensys / Be  
tētē this vñutie is most staitly prohibi-  
ty / not onely to them / but also to the  
vniuersall kynd of faythful people / in so  
muche that as the philosophour grauit-  
tyth. Vñutie is a thyng mooste principall  
agaynst nature . And as the prophete  
Dauid describeth a iuste man / thus he  
sayth : He lent not his money to vñutie.  
And as Clymat⁹ shewyth. A nygard is  
a mokker of the gospell / muche more an  
vñurer / & especially a clerke whom it be-  
houcheth to be more spirituall & vertuous  
than a lay man / for as H. Jerome sayth /  
It is the mooste vehement destruction of  
the church / whan lay men be better dis-  
posed then clerkes . And vñutie truely  
with symonye be two the most myische-  
vous braunches of auaryce / wherupon  
H. Isidore wrythyth in this maner of wyse  
It is contayned in the law of holy fathars  
that prestes / clerkes / or regulars shulde  
fener thēself fro al bulgare & seculari lys /  
absteynynge always fro the voluptuous  
desyres of the worlde & che of the flesche /  
they may in no wyse gyue thēself to vñu-  
tie / they must hate & abhorre the occasiō  
of all suche fowle lucre & fraude / ye they  
must avoyde & eschewe the affeccio of mo-  
ney as though it were a kendlyng of all

L. iii. Other byces.

The lyfe

**F**or what cause regulars are bound  
especiall to folow chastyte of body and  
clennes of mynd / & therfore they ought  
not to haue the cloystres of nōnes / nor  
to entre into theyr houses.

The vi. article.

**T**his thyng hath byn by many ho-  
ly and hyghe bishops / many ge-  
nerall counsayles / and many pro-  
pinciall constitucyons moste especially /  
moste strongly / and moste ostentymes /  
enoyncd and commaunded vnto minis-  
ters of the churche / to all regulars and  
men constitute and appoynted to holy  
ordres that they shuld absteyne from all  
vniennes / incontinencie / and detestable  
fornicaciō. For in the synne of the fleshe  
is the moste great & manifest turpitude  
bestynnes / dishonestie / and fylthynnes.  
And also suche maner of vyses in the  
clergie / bc moste vehemently rebukyd of  
the people / many great vices bc to them  
anuced and ensuyng of them . For  
syse they acquyre the hate and dys-  
dayne of god / than they procure the ig-  
norance of all spirituall thynges / they  
engendre also a peynfull sufferaunce of  
vertuous exercecise / they blynd a man  
mynde / and in conclusion they plucke a  
man

of prestes.

man clene away from the lone and contemplacion botche of godly and heuenly shynge. Therfore (in so much that the holy misterye of the altare is most pure/ and the sacramentes of the churche be most clene and ghostly (especially the sacrament of the blesyd body of our lord) it is most vicyous and inconuenient that the ministres of the church and altare/ shulde so preccyous sacramentes defile & corrupte/ with that moste fowle sylthye and abhominable synne of the flesh and bestly concupiscence/ye and so presume to serue. And to receyue so depe a founlayne of putre & clennes/ with so fowle and corrupt a mouth. And furthermore syns the tyme of the blesyd Apostles/ this moste vyle and abhominable byces haue byn prophybyte unto clerkes and ministres of the churche vpon moste strayte & greuous paynes. The whiche shynge (to the entent it may be the better knownen) I wyl somewhat therof declare. And although that strayte and solitary lyfe is now (the more perte greatly decayed) yet nevertheles I wyl touch a lytel of the statutes and rulys of them that it may appere how vehemently godly fathers (in whom the inspiration of

L.b. the

The lyfe

The holyn gholste / the seale of iustice / & he  
lone of vertue/dyd excellently preueple  
dyd prohibite the vncleenes of clerkes  
beggaris and prestes. Accordyng verily  
to the bulys of the Apostles / eucry man  
constituite in holy ordres / especially a  
preste/salstyng into the synne of vncle-  
nes / shulde be for euer more deposyd /  
which long tyme after was obserued for  
the synne of adiuoutrie / as concerkyng  
ponysment / wherof it is conterfyed  
in the seventh synode holden at Aure-  
lianice. That if a clerke hath ben con-  
uyeted of adiuoutrie/or had confessed it/  
he shuld haue ben deposyd from his of-  
fice/and so to haue ben commytyd un-  
to a monastery duryng his lyfe. And also  
the holy father Pope Clement (as it  
is reed) made institucyon after the same  
maner of perpetuall deposyng and po-  
nyshement of prestes doyng fornicacio.  
But after that/in the tyme of pope Hil-  
arius/that extreme correction was som-  
what mitigate / as touchyng prestes/  
that were penitent and cleare of theys  
owne propre and free wyl/and such as  
creased theys synfull syuyng for in the  
counsell of Bangara and also in the de-  
crece/the xxviii. distunction it is read/that

of priesles.

If a preste hath commyted fornicacion /  
altheugh he oughte by the culps of the  
Apostles / to be deposyd yet by the auctor  
ite of that blesyd pope Hiluerter / if he  
dyd not contynue in vperce / but refusyd it  
and rote agayne of his owne frewylls  
that then he shulde take repentaunce in  
this worlde for the space of ten yeres.  
And deþyng remouyd from the other bre  
therne by the space of thre monethes / he  
shulde be vþyd with bred and water / frþ  
evenyng to evenyng / but in sondayes &  
other principall feastes / he shuld be fedd  
with a lytyll bþynke / fylle of rye / with  
out fleshe or blood / without egges / or cl  
chese / lyenge on the grunde nyght and  
day despyng the mercys of god . Than  
whan thre monethes were determyned /  
he shulde come forthe / but not abrode in  
to open places / for ware least / the multi  
tude of good people myght be offendyd  
by his cuyll example . And it is in no  
wyse lawfull for a preste to be enyoyned  
as a lay man to any open penaunce / but  
after that he hathe refusyd the space  
of a yere and an halfe lyuyng with bred  
and water / excepte in sondayes & other  
principall feastes / in whom he myght

vse wyne

The ipse

whiche wyne/fleshe/blood/egges/and cheves  
accordyng vnto theyz regulat m[is] latez  
but the kynde pere and an halfe beþuge  
synþhed/he myght haue the sacrament  
minyſtryed to hym to that intent that he  
shulde not dispayre in god / and that he  
shulde come to peace/that is to saye/he  
shuld be reconſylid vnto his bretheene/  
and syngi psalmes in the quere amonȝ  
them agayne / yet shulde he not come to  
the ende of the alter / but accordyng to  
the sayeng of blesyd Clement/he shulde  
ministre i[n]ſtric[i]o[n] offyces. Than vnto the  
ende of the seuenthe pere/at all tymes/  
except þ[er]e Ester holy dayes/he shuld  
fast brede & water þ[er]e certayn dayes in  
every weke. But the space of seuen peres  
beyng fulfyllyd/if the bretherne among  
whom he repentyd / do comende his pa-  
nuance as worthy and acceptable in the  
sygnt of god/than the byshop according  
to the auctorite of blesyd pope Calixt/  
maye hym reuoke vnto his pristine and  
former honoure. And surely it is to be  
knowen / that by syngynge one psalter/  
in the secound serye/or gnueng one pray  
to þore folke (if nede be)he may be redemp-  
ted after seuen peres ended. Than vnto  
the ende of the tenth pere there is no

redemp-

of prestes.

redemption / but the syxth serpe must  
nedes be obserued with brede and man-  
ter. But for all this in proces of tym  
this foresayd correction banished. And  
was / but meanely obseruyd / as in the  
thyrd booke of Decretalles is notifyed/  
where amonges all other it is reportyd  
that pope Alexander the thyrd wrote vn  
to a certayn bishop in maner folowyng.  
you ought straightly by interdiction and  
suspension to correcte clerkes constytute  
in holy ordries / that kepe concubynes /  
that they maye remoue suche maner of  
women out of theyr company / because  
no sinistre and froward suspicyon maye  
be had of them. And if any of them res-  
ort to suche women / or presume to re-  
ceyue them / that then they maye be ac-  
cursyd with perpetuall sensence of ex-  
communicacion that other may refrayne  
from lyke offences by example of them.  
Also the same pope wrote unto an arch-  
byshop of Canterbury on this fashyon  
ensuyng. we comande you diligently  
to exhorte the clerkes of your iurisdic-  
tions that kepe any bacchottes within  
theyr subdeantries / that they doo them  
remoues in nowysse to vse them agayn.  
And if they refuse to forsake them than  
to be

The lyfe  
to be suspedyd from all benefyces / be-  
churche unto the tyme that they make  
conuenient satisfaction. And if they be-  
yngc suspendyd, wylle presume to kepe &  
retayne such maner of women / then  
loke that you remoue them from all ma-  
ner of benefyces of the churche for ever  
more. He speketh agayne in another de-  
cretall on this wylle. For by cause that  
clerkes can not inted both to the pape  
fure and carnall despres / and also to the  
divine seruycce of the church / therfore for  
theyr vniences they ought to be dischar-  
ged of al the benefyces of the church. Of  
this matter in many decretalles of po-  
pes as of Gregorius / Hiricius / Lucius  
Innocentius / and other it is evidently  
declared. wher also this is addyd. pape  
lates that presume to suffer such maner  
of clerkes / especially beyngc intreatyd  
with money and other temporall com-  
modite / shall incurre the same penaltys.  
Here of an ordinaunce in the decree the  
fourteene and thryde distinction / is rade  
on this fasshion. If any dyshop consent to  
the fornicacion of prestes / deanes / or  
clerkes in his diocys / other for affec-  
tion / prayce / or rewarde / or els if he  
wyll not ponyfhe and correcte offenders.

by the

of prelates.

by the auctorite of his offyce: he shalbe  
from his office suspelyd. Of the whiche  
sayenge it is also concludyd that aby-  
shop that correctyþ not the transgres-  
sions of such men: is more worthy to be  
callid a salwytē dogge than a byshope.  
I pray you: what meanyth this worde:  
consent: Gratianus expoundyth it in  
this maner of wyse. He that withstand-  
þynþ not bycc and errour: consentyþ  
thereto. Innocentius the pope to the  
same sayþ. Errour that is not resþyd  
is alowyd: and creweþe that is not de-  
fendyd is oppresyd: and that man is  
worthy to be suspectyd of secrete mayn-  
tenaunce: that wyll not withstand open  
synne. All which thyng may be princi-  
pally supposid of prelates that are bold  
to resþyk bycc: by very ductye of theyz of  
fyce. But now sayng it standyþ in such  
mysordre/holwe greatly ought we to be-  
waiþe the abhominacion of the worlde  
that now is. Holwe much is this misera-  
ble & deformyd estate of the church to be  
lamentyd: in whome other no ponyf-  
fement at all: or els the ponyfement  
of the purse is extendyd upon wanton  
priestes clerkes and regulars: why  
the daylye are permittid to walowe

in theyz

### The lyfe

in theyr myscheuous liuyng to the vno-  
cious occasion and euyll example whiche  
lay people. The regular visitaciō of cler-  
kes is to none effecte / for many of them  
do so rejoyce that they be so exemptyd/  
that they may not be correctyd neither  
of the deane/nor yet of the bishoppē/the  
which is euyn a lyke matter as though  
a monke shuld be exemptyd from the cor-  
rection of his abbot or priour . O what  
maner of thyng is such exemption/whā  
agaynst an exemption(moch lesse vnuca-  
sonable then this) the most holy and il-  
luminate father saynte Bernard in his  
boke de Consideracionibus wrote sharp-  
ly and discretely to pope Eugenius and  
the same exemption manye maner of  
wyse dyd reþroue . And for the same ex-  
emption he greatly rebukyd and con-  
trollyd the foresayde pope Eugenius  
sayng thus . wo be to syþhy & wrechyd  
synners vnpouynshyd / which had leuer  
to be resetyd unto the most straþ and  
terrible iudgemente of god / and also to  
fall into powre of god cuerlastyng/than  
in this present lyfe to be ducly correctyd  
of theyr prelates / and to obey the rulys  
and decrecs of holy fathers/do not such  
men semme to be of the nombre of them  
that

of prestes.

that shall be reproynd / and mosse ferre  
from eternall blys. Heme they not also  
to be the chyldyn of infernall torment/  
whom god sufferyth to lyue accordynge  
to the despise of theyr hertes / and trusse  
in theyr owne fantasyes. Furthermore  
for bycause regulars and all other cons-  
titute in holy ordres / be consecrate to  
divyne servycē/me thynketh that they  
fornication is sacrilege. And it is callyd  
sacrilege/ for that it corruptyth holy or-  
dre/by vnworthy handelynge and mys-  
cheuous abusyng that thyng that to  
god is consecrate. Therfore they are es-  
pecially prohibyte to haunte the clig-  
hes of nonnes / & that vnder the Payne  
of excommunicaciō they come not within  
theyr houses to the entent that all euill  
occasion of sacrilege and vicious medde-  
lyng with them shulde be auoyded/ the  
which beyng commyted shuld be dou-  
ble sacrilege/ and also a certayne abho-  
minable and enorme aduoutrye / bothe  
with persones that haue offryd themselues  
vnto the heuenly spouse beyng pro-  
fessyd and consecrate/ and also to enduce  
the vnto the transgression of so solemne  
a howe of chastyte which they haue pro-  
myshed vnto almighty god to be conti-

D uently

The lyfe  
nently obserwyd and kept.

**C**Of sobernes to be obserwyd w/  
regulars and of all surfeit ryot  
and dronkenes to be of  
them auoyded.

The. vii. article.

**I**t is cuyng as our lord spake/  
by the pphete Deas. wyne/  
dronkenes/ and wome / that  
is to say / fornicacion taketh  
away the harte of men / that  
is to wyte / it blyndyth theyz mynde and  
maketh darke the iudgement of man-  
nes reason. And seyng it is the best part  
of man / to lyue accordyng to the iudges-  
ment of reason / than it appertyth that  
surfeit and ryot maye engendre in man  
many incomodytees. For it hurtyth na-  
ture / it shortenyth lyfe / it blyndyth un-  
derstandingyng / it procuryth many syknes  
infirmites and tediousnes / it engedryþ  
the hatered of god / it encreasyth enuye/  
it makyth a man redy to doo iniurie to  
other men / it inducyth slogardysse and  
neglygence / it prouokyth aman to un-  
measurable tryfullnes and bablyng / it dis-  
closyth also vterly al secretenes of hart  
com-

of prestes.

compenction and ffe. Therfore it is  
not onely probbyte vnto al regulars &  
spirituall persons/but vniuersally to all  
faythfull christen people / and Christe  
hymselfe sayng thus. Take ye heide that  
your hartes be not oppresyd with sur-  
fet and dronkenes / nor with any other  
regard of this worlde. For in conclusion  
lyke as glotony doth corrupte y<sup>e</sup> mynd  
so it makyth the bodye to be dysfor; mynd  
monstrous / and depryuethe a man from  
naturall comlynes/and also from a con-  
uenient quantite of body/and that vyle  
voluptuousnes of taste is bought ryghts  
dcre. Therupon saynt Bernarde sayth/  
that the pleasure of the throte that now  
adays is so muche made of / contcyneth  
scantly the bredeth of two syngers / and  
yet for the delectacion of so lytyll a part  
howe dilygently / howe costly/and with  
howe great labour do we p<sup>r</sup>epare / but  
at length to our great Payne. By this  
meanes the backes and sholders of men  
are spredde / and made brode lyke mon-  
stres/herby the great belyes are not on-  
ly fatted/but also puffed vp lyke women  
with chylde. And whyle the bondys be  
not able to here the fleshe/many dyuers  
dyseases muste nedes engendre.

D.ii. O with

### The lyfe

With how great labour and exerçses  
is suche dete and delituous pleasure pre-  
pared. Glotony and lechery doo obeye  
the pleasure of the fleshe. Hurfet & drou-  
kenes is the deuylls chaleys/for whan  
a man hath both repleynghyd his mynd  
and stonake Christe in suche a riotous  
person can fynde no place. And lyke as  
fyre and water can not be meged both  
to gether Kyght so spirituall and corpo-  
rall pleasures can not be suffreyd in one  
place. For where Christ perceyuyth sur-  
fet of a riotous person in his drynkyng  
he wyl not bouchsafe to reward hym  
with his wynnes that are more swete  
than suger or hony/ And surely whan y<sup>e</sup>  
curious and delycate dyuersyte of metes  
and drynkes hath fully fedde the stomac-  
kes of men / there is no boyde pure nor  
clene place for heunynly fode . why loue  
ye voluptuosnes / forsaking vertue and  
helth. Truly for a soleyn and brefe swet-  
nes and delectacion/ye do procure euers-  
lastynge payne and bytternes/so that at  
the laske ye wyll desyre/as the rygh glot-  
ton dyd/one droppe of water to quench  
the hete of the fyre of hell / & yet ye shall  
not obteyne it. For agayne whom doth  
the scructe hete of the infernall hungry  
and

of prestes.

and heuyllpshe thy<sup>r</sup>st and other most ex-  
treme ponyshement/sume more than as  
gaynst glottones/whiche do couert the  
necessary sustentacion of pore people in-  
to they<sup>r</sup> owne pleasures. And playnly  
as S. Bernad wytnessyf. The fantes  
of the fleshe/the pleasure of the body/the  
fulnes of the wombe wyll other leue a  
man before dethe/ or els forsake hym at  
the poynte of dethe. Than this fleshe of  
yours shortly afterwardes shalbe depu-  
ted to wormes/the soule shalbe commyt-  
tyd to infernall ponyshement/where such  
be compaygnions in paync as were to  
gether compaygnions in byce. O thou  
delicate man that swymmyse in plea-  
sure & ryches/ret in them beyng wrap-  
ped thou lokyst euer for thy<sup>r</sup> owne con-  
fusion/death/and damnacion.  
Note  
what the Apostle saith. The kyngdome  
of heuyn/is nother mete nor drynke/no  
ther sylike/nor purple / for the rych man  
habundaunt of these / shall straite des-  
cende into hell. O ye delicate & volups-  
tuose persones / whose god is the bely/  
whiche noryshe your hertes and bodye  
with riot and lechery/what say yow to  
this: you do here that mete is ordyned  
for the bely and the bely for mete / ret

D. iii. god

The lyfe

god wyl destroy the one with the other/  
and yet god shall destroye them bothe.  
Therefore let regulars that be almooste  
vitterly decayed for lacke of obedyence  
vnto holy rulys take heede and feare god  
which p<sup>e</sup> ryghtwyse iudge saith as heret  
foloweth. wo be to you that be satis  
fyed with fode / for ye shalbe a hanged.  
wo be to you ryche men whose onely cō  
fort is in your ryches. wo be to you that  
lawghe for ye shal wepe and moane / dyd  
not Judas the Apostle wryte of these  
rhynges / vomytyng they; owne confus  
yon / to whom an infernall stome of  
darkenes is conseruyd and kepte. why  
sayeth the holy Apostle in this maner.  
They be not onely corruptyd & spottyd  
in they; feastes / but also they be spottes  
and corruption / for that that in they; se  
dyng / manyfolde synnes fallen amonoge  
them. And lyke as the Apostle wrote to  
certayne of the Gentyles that were con  
uertyd sayng thus. Some tyme ye were  
darkenes / for in eatynge or ledayng they  
do not onely excede in qualite or quan  
tite of meates or drynkes / but also in  
bayne superfluous and eyll wordes /

wyll

of prestes.

Wyl' not say in skaunderous knanythe  
and wanton/in topes/tryfules/playes/  
mockes / mowes / dissolucons / losse of  
tyme/and moch more heelnes. The pro-  
phete Jobell cryeth vnto suche maner  
of people/sayenge: Awake ye dronkar-  
des / and wepe/and all you that dynke  
wyne for plesaunce and swetnes/morne  
ye / for it shal peryshe out of your mou-  
thes / furthermore of glotonye that by-  
cyous mother/followyth fowle lechery a  
armore bycyous doughter. Now be not  
all saythfull christen people bounde to  
lyue straightly in penytent conuersacion  
and ferewlly in respecte of god aboue.  
And the hyer that regulars be consti-  
tute in degee and spirituall estate / so  
be the more vertuous/sobre/and fearful  
than the laye people. Let no man dis-  
ceyue hymself for god recquyret of eue-  
ry man that he shal lyue accordynge to  
the degee that he is callyd vnto. Be-  
sydes this the longer that an eyll cus-  
tome is bsyd/the more iniuste and incu-  
rable it is. And therfore from the fyre  
foundacion of the church/holy & blesyd  
fathers haue moste straightly and vche-

D.iii. mently

### The lyfe.

mently prohibypte the synne of th. si he  
glotony/dronkennes / and wantones to  
the mynsteres of the churche / as of the  
same/in the decrete many thynges are de-  
clared . It is reed also in the rulys of the  
Apostles/that a bishop/preste/or deane/  
gyuen to ryot or dronkenes/ must other  
for sake it / or els be condemned and  
deposed . A subdeane reder or synger in  
the churche doyng the same/must other  
ceasse or be expulsyd from the commu-  
niō . The same purpose it is brought in/  
in the. xxxv. distincōn/that especially  
dronkenes shuld be auoyded of clerkes/  
for of all other byces it is the narice  
and cherysher . Also in the counsell of Aga-  
thon it was ordeyned / that a clerke  
beyng dronke shulde be seueryd from the  
communion/for the space of xxx. dayes/  
orels corporally to be ponyshed . And the  
Apostle in lyke maner wryteth to all  
saythfull people and enioyneth them in  
this wyse . That they lyue not in gloto-  
ny & dronkenes. &c . And also regard that  
they vse not the desyres of the fleshe .  
And agayne / we be detkours vnto the  
fleshe / not to that intent that we shulde  
lyue after the fleshe / for if we lyue after  
the fleshe/ we shold dye .

Another

of preses.

Anot other thing there is wherof the most  
holie Peter the Apostle dothe vs aduertis-  
tysse/sayenge thus; welbelouyd feendes/  
I desche you absteyne from carnall de-  
syre/whiche maketh batayle agaynst the  
soule. Further S. Paule sayet ( It be-  
houth a bishop to be sober/chaste/and  
not dronken) perteyneth also to all men  
constitute in holie ordres / as the holie fa-  
thers Ambrosy & Augustine do wytnesse  
bysydes all this/it appereth by the worte-  
des of S. Jerome howe hard & difficy-  
le it is for hym that keppyd not sober-  
nes/to kepe his chastyte. The princes  
mysteres of the churche/whiche do mar-  
lowen delicioys pleasure sayynge as  
feastes that they kepe chastyte/be ( by  
the wordes of the propheete ) worthy to  
be caste out from sayre houses and deli-  
cate banckettes / into extremer darkenesse/  
whiche Jerome sayth further. The glo-  
tomy of the belly yronwoyklyng lechery/and  
puttyng a partie every good wroke and a  
belly boylunge with wyne sone fallyng to  
pleasure of the body. For why the belly  
of man and the preuy membris be very  
nere one to an other / so that by the ne-  
renes of those membris ye maye perceyue  
the more ready inclination of vsse. Fur-  
ther

S. v. others

### The lyfe

thermore as it is mentioned ( Veritie  
 primo) Out lorde commaundyd the p're-  
 des of the olde lawe / whose prestyode  
 by profession was but carnall and figu-  
 ratyue that they shulde dynke no wyne  
 nor any drynge that myght make them  
 dronke / whose wordes are these / wyne  
 and all that may make you dronke / ye  
 shall not dynke what tyme ye entre in  
 the tabernacle of the testamet lest ye dye  
 so that ye maye haue knowlege to dys-  
 cern betwene the holy & vndholy / Howe  
 moche more this carnalite / dronkenes /  
 glotony / and voluptuousnes / to be auoy-  
 den of prestes & ministres of the churche /  
 whose prestyode is all to gether spiri-  
 tuall / and therfore shuld continually be  
 occupied in diuine seruyce. Therefore lo-  
 uynge he embraceth soberenes / which is  
 the very secrete keper of mynde / sensys /  
 body / and also membris / the defence of  
 chastite / the gouernour of hamfastnes  
 The very preseruor hold of peace & friend-  
 shippe. For truly dronkenes in a prest  
 or regular is as daynous as sacrilege /  
 & also in any other man it is a great vypce  
 soberenes prolongyng the naturall lyfe  
 of man / it noyseth the lyfe of grace / is

deser-

of preses.

deservyth the lyfe of toy / it causyth the  
bodyc of man to be well proporcyoned/  
and valyaunt/it makyth a quyer harte/  
it makyth redye a mans mynde to pro-  
cede in wylidome and vertue / it makyth  
a man apte to applie diuyne seruyce/to  
laude god in hymnes and psalmes. And  
to be onely gyuen to holy medytacion.  
Therefore regulars that are commauns  
byd to serue almyghty god / and to be  
contynually gyuen to the obseruaunce  
of hym must euermore obserue this ver-  
tu e of sobrenes. And as the most hyghe  
byshoppe hathe straightly commaundyd/  
that if wyes be stronge they muste be  
temperyd vnto them / nor in any wyse  
that one prouoke another to drynkynge/  
but especially let them beware of suche  
mater of drynkynge/as men call drynk-  
hyng/pleggynge/ & quaffyng/which be  
rily be drestly / & folwysche / for that that  
maye agree with the complexion of the  
one/maye fortune not to agree with the  
complexion of the other. And in conclusiō  
to knowe howe vicyous and out of or-  
dice it is to excede in the byces foresayd/  
it appertyth by that / that the pope  
commaundyd all suche offenders to be

Suspens

### The lyfe

suspendyd from theyz offyces and denes  
fyses/except by warnynge they be t. r. y.  
fyld. For if a principall ruler or gouer-  
nour of regulars/wyll not correct such  
euill doers / other if he hymselfe do per-  
sonally offend( whiche god forbyd) in any  
wyce before touchyd. O howe great and  
horrible damnacion hangyth ouer his  
bed/and also ouer the bedes of such spu-  
full regulars as do offend in the same/  
not wyllyng to receyue any holsome dis-  
ciplynge or lernynge in this present lyfe.  
**C** Howe it is prohibyte to all clerkes  
and ministres of the churche to occupye  
any marchaundysle : or to exerceryse any  
temporall offyces or cheupsaunce.

### The, viii. article.

Lordyng vnto the effecte of  
the ende / all meane thynges  
muste be ordryd/for the ende  
causyth thynges of necessite  
to be done : whiche be ordry-  
ned for the ende. And seyng the state of  
regulars was institute prouyded and  
graunted (as is before expredd) to the  
entent that they shulde applye to the ser-  
uyce of theyz maker/with a free / pure /  
quayte mynde / & seyng also that by theyz  
merites and prayers they shulde be re-  
conspn

of prestes.

comyled and desyre god to be mercyfull  
vnto themselfe and also to them : by  
whose almes/charite / & stypendys ther  
are sustyned: for that cause they are for  
bydden to vse any worldly actes or occu  
pations whiche shulde be a behement let  
both vnto ye forsayd quyenes of mynd  
vnto theyr pure profession of god / & also  
vnto theyr inward libertye to dypynge  
matters: whereby they shuld be dyschar  
ged of all secular and worldy busynes/  
And these be the same worldy busynes  
that be ordyned for worldy lucte: that  
is to wytte: worldy marchaundysse and  
secular offyces by whom the hart of man  
is greatly disposyd to outwardē thynges  
ges is greatiwrappyd in worldy thin  
ges. And also with drawen from spiri  
tuall and ghostly thynges. To the con  
trarye wherof the Apostle sayth in this  
wyse. Nonne that seruith god ought to  
entangle hymselfe in worldy busynes.  
wherof the bishoppe Iacobus spake in  
the actes of the counsell of Cartage on  
this fashyon. I suppose that my sugge  
stion doth ryght well please your holyn  
nes: & partly displease ye: w' ich is/that  
suche as serue god / and annered to the  
clergie/ shuld not medle in worldy busyn  
nes/

The lyfe  
nes/offyces / or stuardshypes of houses.  
The holy bishop Gratianus saith that  
this sentence before reherted was institute  
of the Apostles / that is to say that/  
no man mynistryng in the seruyce of god  
may folde hymselfe in worldly busynes.  
And therfore clerkes may be no purchas-  
ers of houses and no purchasers of hou-  
ses may occupye the offyces of clerkes.  
And further to proue these thynges / it  
evidently appertyneth in the .xiii. questio.  
As this / it was establyshed in the statu-  
tes of rulys at the counsell of Tarraco/  
that who so euer wold be one of the cler-  
gie / he must not vse the study of byenge  
good chepe and sclyngre dene / and if he  
byd/he shuld be correctyd by the clergy.  
For that purpose also it was institute  
in the holy synode of Nicco / that for by-  
cause many clerkes folowyng the soleil  
lucre of auarice/do forget the preceptes  
and commaundementes of god / there-  
fore that holy counsel byd ordeyne this/  
that is to wyte. If any man from hens-  
forthe were founde takynge any vsury/  
eyther folowyng any soleil lucre by any  
suche maner busynes/or puttynge forthe  
any maner of corne for aduaantage or  
goyng about any suche mattier of mar-  
chaun

of prestes.

chaun<sup>d</sup> vse / for the onely luctre & gaynes,  
therof, he shulde then be expulsyd from  
the clergie: and another of the churche  
degree to be had in his place. Therof  
pope Gelasius speykþ in lyke maner  
sayeng thus. Clerkes know ryght well  
that they ought to absteyne from such  
vnworthy gaynes: and also to refrayne  
from all crafte and couetousnes of any  
maner of marchaudyse. And of what de  
gree so euer they be that wyll not ceasse  
to vse such luctre: immediatly they muste  
be compellyd to forslake they<sup>r</sup> offyces in  
the church. In the counsell also of pope  
Mactyn it was comandyd in this wyse  
If any of them forget yngc the feare of  
god had done vslupe vpo trust to wynne  
but the hundredth parte therof or lokyd  
for gaynes by any maner of marchaun  
dyse: or hath taken increase: by byeng or  
sellyng any wyne: corne: or other thyng:  
he shuld be caste downe from his degree  
and another of the clegge shulde haue  
supplied his stede & place. The sayenge  
of pope Melchiades herewith agreyth.  
The holy generall couisel hath decreyd:  
that hereafter no clerke shall haue any  
possessiōis or intermedel with any world  
ly busynes: except it be for the charge &

(mayntenance)

The lyfe

of infantes/orphelins/and wydowes/  
or excepte he were commaundyd by his  
byshop to take the chargys of any goodes  
longyng vnto the church: for the offyces  
spirituall and temporall are exteryse.  
But furthermore it appertyth about the  
ende of the thysde boke of Decretalles  
in the Lateran coulissell: what busynes is  
prohibite vnto clerkes. And thus it is  
there layd. There be many secular busyn-  
nes of the which we shall touche parte/  
bycause vnto them all carnall concupis-  
cence apperteyneth. And what so euer  
a man that couetyth more tha is ryght:  
it is rallyd folwe luctre / it is forbydden  
vnto the iniustly to take or receyue any  
rewardes:to byre any mā for any world-  
ly gayne or pray/to loue any contention  
debate or sholdyng to plede or dispute in  
secular plees/except it be for the defensē  
of orphelins/or wydowes. They ought  
to be no doctores or proctores of se-  
cular matters:to loue no seculer games/  
or gyftes of sylthy actes or communica-  
tion/to delyte in dyse/to desyre vnyconne-  
nient apparayle for theyz estate:to syne  
in delycyousnes : to walowe in glotonyn  
and dronkenes:to haunt:or to hauke:or  
to be conuersant in any dayne or super-  
fluous

of prestes.

Anous busynes. Behold how bitterly we  
prohybte these thynges with all other  
lyke/ unto regulars and mynisters of  
the altare of god. In therulys of the apo-  
stles it is ferher of this matter mencio-  
ned after this facion. A bysshop/prest/or  
deanc ought in nowyse to take vpp the  
any secular cure or charge. Pope alcran  
dethe thyrd dyd also forbyd both regu-  
lars / and other clerkes vpon peyne of cut-  
syng that they shuld make no marcha-  
dyng for any worldly lucre. Saynt Iero-  
me also sayth in this maner. Flee and  
auoyde from the company of a clerke be-  
yng a merchaunt. Auoyd from poueris  
to ryches/ from a meane man to a noble  
man/ as though it were syd a plague of ye-  
pestilence. Therfore prestes/ and clerkes  
be forbydden / to be brokers of any secu-  
lar busynes. All this is confymed by po-  
pe Nicolas in the. xxii. chappice of the  
decree in the thyrd questyd sayeng this.  
It came to knowlege at a general coun-  
sel that certayne of the clergye had take  
vpon them secular matters/ for the fol-  
le lucre of great possessyons. Therfore  
by that holy coulcell it was decreed that  
from thenschorh no prest/clerk/no; regu-  
lar shulde hyre any possessyons/or inter-

The lyfe

medle with any secular matters or p[ro]c[ess]urallis except such as be tallyd by the law theronto for the defence of such as be within age or bellynes / or the great necessites of wydwales / or els yf the Bishop bath compyttd the gouernance of the church goodes unto them. And therfore oftentimes it is touched in the decree that some maner of busynes be vns lawfull to be don of all men and that be such as can not be done without tympe as vsury & symonye. And ther be some that seldom or veray hardly may be done without synne as the marchaundysse before rehersyd. But now to knowe wherfore clerkes & other ministres of ye churche ought to absteyne from all such worldly busynes / saynt Thomas in the xxxviii. question of his boke cōpendiously touchyng fapeng thus . Clerkes ought not only to abstaine from such thynges that be euill of them selfe / but also from such thynges as haue a sauour or colour of euill as marchaundysse hath / forby cause it is or deyned for worldly lucre / which clerkes bittely ought to despise and eschew. Secoundarily for the great haunt of synne among merchauants. Thridly by cause that by marchaundysse the mynde of man

of prestes.

man is wrapped with worldly carkes &  
utterly withdrawen from godly thyngs  
To this the holy Martyr and Bisshop  
Liprianus notyng the occasyon thereof  
addyth his mynde sayeng . Suche as be  
honord with holy presthode or constiutis  
in the seruice of clerkes ought them selfe  
to applye to nothyng / but to the altare  
and sacryfycye of god with holy and de-  
voute prayers / leccyons . Behold ther-  
fore to how vertuous / quiet and spiritu-  
all lyfe and good example regulars be  
bound whiche be commaundyd to abstey-  
ne not only from euyll and byce it selfe /  
but also from all spye of euyll and occa-  
syon of synne / in lyke maner from all sen-  
suall affection / from the plesures of this  
worlde / from all pompe and worldly gat-  
nyshynge / mchely also and lowly from  
all vayne and superfluous actes playes  
tryfullnes / or games . And furthermore  
they be commaundyd in nowysse to geue  
audyence to mynystrelles / gestours / or  
dysardes / to play at dysse / or cardes /  
or to be present at suche games  
as thore playnly in the  
Artyle folowyng  
is declared.

E.ii.

fol

The lyfe

¶ For what cause Clerkes/ Regulars/  
and other cōstitute in holy ordres orgte  
to restrayne fro mynstell; Jesters an  
dysardes/tauernes/ & eke the play of  
Cardes an Wyse.

¶ The ix. Artycle. ¶



It is conuenient for myny  
stres of the church (whom  
it behouith to dysferre fro  
the lyfe & maners of secul-  
lar me) to be ryte in good  
maners and dyspolicyon/  
to geue dylygence vnto contricyon & to  
the fere of god / in lyke maner to applye  
them selfe vnto praier/psalmodyes with  
other actis of penance in the syght of al-  
mighty god/to the intent that they may  
please and satissie god / as well for they  
owne excesse and synne/ as for the offens-  
ces of theyr sondars and benefactours.  
Therefore they are cōmaundyd to bewa-  
re of suche thynges as wyll them dysser-  
uer from contrition remorse of cōscience  
and deuotyon/ and suche as wyll enduce  
unperfite lyuyng and engendre worldly  
condicyonys/as thcse be/that is to say/sa-  
mpanyarite/excerceyse/games/ & dissportes  
of mynstellis/Jesters/ & dysardys/ba-  
lynge

of prestes.

cyng of tauerns feasts and bankettes /  
playng at dysse and cardys/whereunto  
many enorme byces be annexed / and so  
it procedeth of the loue and desyre of mo-  
ney and concerthyng auacpte. But fur-  
thermore that it may be more depcely plai-  
ly an surely notyfied / after what facyon  
it is lawfull for regulars and mynystres  
of the churche some tyme to play/s what  
maner of dysport is comly for them/that  
is to be notyd that saint Thomas wyp-  
pyth in his seconde destynctiōns. Duct  
dus also in his boke calld summa cōfessōrū/  
and other are of the same oppynyon say-  
eng thus. Lyke as a man nedyth corpor-  
all refresshyng/ rest/ & slepc/ forbycause  
he is not able to labour contynually /  
ryght so the soule hath nede of recreacyng  
and comfort/ whiche must be done by  
some wordes or actis where nothyng is  
intendyd or required but only spirituall  
delectacion and pleasure. And these be  
calld wordys or actes of paſtyme / and  
dysport concernyng whom/ thē ethyngs  
are principally to be obserued. The fyre  
is this. That no ſuch delectacyng be requi-  
red / by wordes or actis in honest fylthy  
or hurtfull to any man. The ſecunde is

L.iii.      that

The lyfe

that the grauyte and deuotion of herte  
may in nowys be resoluyd by ony suche  
game. The thynde is that y<sup>e</sup> game may  
agre both with the person / tyme / & place  
and also y<sup>e</sup> the game be garnysched with  
other circumstaunces of vertu. And it is  
ly that vertue wherwith a man may so  
conueniently behau hymselfe / in games  
or playes / is ( after the mynde of the phi-  
losophour in the fourth boke of Ethyks )  
callyd. Furthermore yf there be any fol-  
le or fylthy wanton hurtefull / or sklaun-  
detous wordes / or actes exersyed in such  
games / or playes. It is a great synne &  
ostenlymes a synne mortall / althoughe  
perauenture the play of it selfe / be but  
a synne venyall. Now here we may per-  
ceue / with whom / what tyme / and after  
what facyon it is lawfull for Regulars  
and other mynistris of the churche to  
play. Suche may play after the maner  
and facyon forseyd / as do cōsyst in good  
exersyse bothe of spirituall and tempor-  
all thynges / so that therwith they do  
not them selfe ouermuch defatigate and  
make wery. But the same libertie is not  
gyuen vnto them that be full of bab-  
lynge and Ideines / whiche contynually  
do moue lawghter and wyldnes whiche

also

of prestes.

also do haunte bankettes / and in them  
excede bothe in communicacion mockes/  
gestis outtagyousnes and intemperan-  
cye and also in all other immoderate ch-  
acestes . Therfore the mynystres of the  
churche do greatly offend / and deserue  
intollerable punyschement / especilly re-  
gulars and suche as are constitute in ho-  
ly ordres / whiche shuld be every day be-  
rayed to do such thynges as perteigne  
to the seruycce of god / and spedely per-  
me theyz howres and tymes of prayer /  
hastely puttynge them selfe forward in  
dyngne seruycce . But in the stede therof  
they do dylygently fulfull such thynges  
as may please the carnall carcass / fedyn-  
ge it gorgeously and delycately delyfyn-  
ge in many praytys several toyes . And fur-  
thermore whan theyz belyes be full or  
at other vacaunt tymes / they apply the  
selfe other to gestes and tryfulls or elles  
to that / that is more enorne and out of  
the way / as to play at cardis and dysse/  
or beyng in presens where suche games  
be vsed comonyng / talkynge / and beyng  
in great fauor or samylparite with the  
players / beyng many tymes half parte  
whiche the / in therewynnyng or lesing .

L.III. Lectaynly

The lyfe.

Certainly these men haue no reasone  
bie cause to play but rather in such tyme  
as they do play they oughte to bewayle  
theyr synne / & the tyme that they haue  
spent in all such bayne recreations / ideli-  
nes / tales / fables / laughes / vnsucktful-  
ly / ye and to say the truthe vpcosly / &  
also to moane and make amedes accor-  
dyngly / for al theyr neccesityens and de-  
fautes whiche they haue commykyd in  
not performinge theyr dyuyne seruice.  
But these maner of persones are only  
gauen to theyr games and dysportes / &  
as for theyr deuotion and percyntnes of  
hart( yf peraqueture they had ony before)  
it is altogether seueryd and corruptyd.  
O god lord howe perillous is the lyfe of  
such men / ye howe wycked and damnable  
whiche( bcyng bound after dynner & sup-  
per done / to retorne to theyr chambres )  
or to go in to theyr studyes or libraires /  
there to be gauen ( as Lippiane saith ) to  
holys redynge to holosome doctrine & de-  
noute meditation ) wyl vitterly shewe the  
selfe vnto vtward thyngs / and stobburn-  
ly dyspose them selfe to carnall & wordly  
pleasure / dyuerse maner of wyse lesyng  
and in spendynge that preciouse tyme /  
that god hath grauntyd vnto them / no-  
thyng

of picles.

þyng regarding that þyng that they  
are allede unto/nother dyslosyng theyz  
conscyens before god/noz yet at ony tyme  
me dewly and effectually ponderynge/  
how great and manyfold thynges they  
are bound unto. Of suche persons saynt  
Bernard the electe seruāt of god spekþ  
thus. The negligent slacknes of clerkys  
troblith & molestþ the churche of god  
throughout al the wrold/surely they are  
entyched by other menes laboures/ they ete  
the stetes of the erth without money or  
charge & deuoure y<sup>e</sup> laboures of y<sup>e</sup> poore  
a mans mynd accustomed with delyþe-  
ousnes/ and barreigne of lernyng must  
nedes engēdrie many byces. How many  
(I pray you) shal we se the whiche do not  
serue nor obey Crist as theyz lord & god  
but theyz wombes as theyz lord & god/  
and verþly fornycaciō rayneth in many  
of them/ which mynistring unto the ma-  
ker and encreaser of all clennes and cha-  
sityte/with a fylthy mouth and an uncles-  
ne hart/do not serue the angell of god &  
dynge nere unto them / whiche may de-  
stroy and cutte the atwo in the myddyll.  
Furdermore as Duradus in his boke  
callid summa priuicidit sayenge. Every  
maner of play y<sup>r</sup> is applyed unto chalice

### The fyfte

as fortune (as the play at dyse is) may  
not be used for mony / except syre thyngs  
be aggetable with the same. The syrte  
is conuenience of pson / for it is not law-  
full for clerkes to play at dyse / wherfore  
let q; comyn dylser / or bslurac be put backe  
from obstatynynge spiritual dygnite / not  
withstandyng ther be a custome to the  
concrecy as apperith in the tytle Extra  
de excessu. Inter dilectos. yet never the  
les the benefyce beynge obteyned / the  
byschoppes may owe hym fauour / yf he  
wpp h̄e corrected / vñlike wyle of ryght he  
ought to be deposyd / for other wyle / he  
ought by the law to be deposyd as aperte  
ith the cleri. question in the tytle. Si  
quis caritas. Tholselondc is conueni-  
ency of mattryer or substance for some  
mangis of wylsethey may play for meates/  
or drynke / supposing theyr game alway  
to be comendable as is before expressyd/  
so ȳt be not intedyd but as reasonable  
solace & no lucre. The thyrd is the conclusi-  
yon therof/ that is to say/ that it be not  
exercysed for couetysse or auarice but for  
recreacyon. The fourth is / measure / for  
no man may play above a shyllynge / al-  
though the player be veray rych as it ap-  
pereth in the begynnyng of the tytle / de-  
religiosis

of prestes.

eligious. The syngyngh is tyme euenyng  
so þt the play be not done in tyme of mo;  
thyng penaunce or couzell. The. vi. is þt  
conuenience of the facyon and maner so  
that your play be wythout dyscyeþe/and  
no man do any thyng agaynst the law  
of the game/no; one prouoke another to  
play. Clerkes fallynge in to so great  
blyndnes wychednes/þt frasye may well  
notethis/that notwithstandingyng they  
holys culps & deccres/they be bold/þt pre-  
sumptuous to dysc openly / and for that  
fowle desyre of lucre/they play at cardes  
and dysc lyke as it were seculac gästers /  
where yet not withstandyng they are  
bound to make restitucyon of theyȝ wynn-  
yng oreis to couerte it into some other  
charitable vse otherwyse they may nos  
be sayd no; yet absoluid by sacramentes  
There be also so many & so haynous offe-  
ces cōsistynge in such maner of play/whi  
che raymudus hostiensis Johan & other  
wt hetherce/þt paueture withi this boke  
somwhat towchid/let the þt therfore c̄ep̄t  
the lyke wrechyd creatureis/let the þt p̄d̄c̄  
theyȝ dredful iudgement/þt also þt tormentis  
of hel intollerable:which sone afterward  
they wyl incurre without remedie/ except  
they do not only forsake theyȝ abhorri-  
son/but also do suffer cōdigne penaunce.

The lyfe

**C**an introduction of dyuers holosome  
considerations whereby we may perce-  
ue that all seyntfull Christen people /  
especially mynisters of the churche  
are bound to despise all vanyte  
and superfluite of playnes.  
dysportes & other  
wayne delectacions.

**C** The. x. Artyle. **C**

**L**IKE as the holy Apostle Haynt  
Petrus wyttnessythe. Our sauour  
Christe sufferyd for vs/ leuyng ex-  
ample to folowe his steppes. Therfore  
who so sayeth that he dwellyth in Churche  
he must walke as Christe walkyd. For  
membris ought to be confor|mable vnto  
theyr hed. And forsoþe it is radde that  
Christe in this present world/ dyd syghe  
morne wepe and was crowblyd in spirit  
but he never played lawghyd nor made  
dysport. For that cause we are bound(as  
moche as the fragylte of humane na-  
ture wyll permitt and suffer vs) to fol-  
low his perisynnes graunte and dylygen-  
ce as by his owne comauement appes-  
yth in this wyse. He that wyll be my  
seruant let hem folow me. And forder-  
more.

The

of preties.

The fyrt introduction to despysse bo-  
huptuoshes vanite as slacknes is the con-  
sideracyou of the lyfe and conuersacion  
of Christ/ which sayd vnto his dysciples  
in this maner. I gaue you exaple/that  
as I dyd/you shuld do/ holy salt Hiero-  
me affympth the same saien thus/it is  
impossible to reioyce of this woldē/and  
after to reigne with Christ. To ye same  
Salomon sayd in this wyse. I reputed  
lawghyng as an errour/ and saye vnto  
Joy/why art thou deceoyd in bayne.

The secounde introduction is the con-  
sideraciō of the place of this present lyfe  
for we be in this woldē as though we  
were in a great exyle/in a vale of lamen-  
tacyon in a cotage of calamyte / in a re-  
ligion of the shadowe of deth in a feyg-  
ned kyngdome in a pylgrymage in a  
worne way and in a pryson.

Therefore me thynke it agaynst all wyl-  
dome in such a place to desyre to swyme  
in delycyousnes/to be let slyppe amonge  
banytees/to be refreshid with lawghter  
and dysports / ye & he that in this woldē  
couetythe to be prosperous in ryches ple-  
sure and honour shewyth hym selfe in so  
doynge to be no pylgrym / nother the  
rouer of the heuenly contrey/but a tylfis-  
te and

### The lyte

ne and sone of babylon / a seruante of him  
quicke / a man in the way of perdyngion.  
Therof spekyth the prophet Jeremie  
saynge thus . O thou wandryng and  
wycked doughter / vnto the tyme that  
thou be losyd & dissoluypd from delycyous  
nes / my soule refusyth all comfort. And  
also this of the prophet David wo is me  
that my dwellyng place is prolongyd.  
And the Apostle wytnesþ of the holy  
Propheteis of the old testamet and of þe  
lawe of nature in this maner / that they  
confessyd to be Pylgrymmes & estran-  
gers vpon the Erthe. Therfor from this  
present exile we shuld ostentymes veray  
scrutinly syghe vnto that most gloriouse  
countrey of blesyd men / & these worldy  
iopes we shuld abhoze / as though they  
were the veray catppis of euerlastynge  
dethe / that we myght say as the apostle  
sayde. God forbyd that I shulde reioyce  
in any thyng except in the crosse of my  
lord Jesu Christe by whom the world of  
me is persecuted / and I of the worlde.  
The thyrd is the consideration of daun-  
gere i whom we be put at large. For we  
do walke and be alwayses couersaunt in  
the myddys of gynnys / & i a fylde every  
wher fully compassed with a multitude of  
innumerabla

of presles.

innumerable innumere most cruel & ferous  
ty enemyes of this worlde whose power &  
furor betay few do escape. And truly we  
be vngerteighe whether our conuersacio[n]  
do please god or no / or whether fynally  
we shall be damned / or whether our offe-  
ces shalbe forgyuen. And also we knowe  
that greateously & many maner of wyse  
we dysplease our most strait & fferful iud-  
ge & that dayly we offend beyng also be-  
tay prone & redy to byce. At such tyme[n]  
ys we deuly consydre, it shal please vs bet-  
ter to moyne and lament than to make  
dysport & playes. And also we shal say  
as Halomon sayd . Better it is to go to  
the houle of lametacyon th[an] to the hou-  
le of plesure and solace. In the one house  
that is to say in the house of morwynge/  
the ende of all mortall men is noty d[is] a  
man iuynghe shulde ponder what is to  
come.

The fourth is the consideracyon of all  
evill and myschye as well of offence as  
of payne & pouishment that every dage  
is done in the worlde( that is to say) by  
cause so many great and myschewous ac-  
tes be contynually done in the worlde/  
by cause our maker a myghtye of his  
creatures at all tym[e] is hadde in small  
honour

The lyfe

honour and reverence / bycause contynually so many souls do eternally peryshe / bycause so many and great tribulac... calampes / penury dyscomfort / oppresions / do incessantly chaunc our frendes / neibours / & membris of Christ of whom (yf we loue them) we must haue compas syon / as we wolde that thy shulde haue compassyon of vs beyng in lyke case / surely who so doth this dewly ponder / he wyll say as Jeremye sayd .

who wyll geue to my hed / water / and to myn eyes a fountayne of teres / & I wyll wepe euermore . And scynge Samuell so longe tyme and so sorowfull bewayled Saul / and Ieoronne the destrucciyon of Ierusalem . Paulc also some of the Coman / this / howe much more is our forseris my schiefe to be bewaylyd . Therfore let vs haue compas syon of our neibours beyng in great daunger and dyscomfort .

**C**the . v . is the multitude and greatness of harme and dyspleasure / that suche delectacions bryngyth vnto man . For they spoyle a man from all grace / whiche delectacions also broght Salomon in to great foly . And atteyded Eve to the transgesyon of goddes comauement / they do behemently blyud the mynd of man and

of prestes.

and harden and maynteyne hym in mys-  
chief yethey procure euclasyng dam-  
nation. For that thyng wherin a man  
delptyng is but of short tyme his vexacy-  
on and troubl therfore is perduration,  
what man for the plesure of one nyghte/  
wyl be glad euer after to lye i a brenyng  
fornace. Wherfore presume we to com-  
mpt mortall synne wherfor one synne  
mortali we must be ponyssed with the fer-  
uent infernall paynes that euermore do  
endure. The syrth is vylenes fylthynes  
and bestly pleasure of the flesche / for the  
which man is most despysed of god and  
made vnyk to aungels / and conforma-  
ble to bestes / wheruppon the sayenge of  
the prophet Iohel concerning carnall  
desire is expoundyd on this facyon. The  
herdes of bestys dyd rotte and consume  
in theyr owne fylthynes and dung.  
And as the prophet David sayth in ly-  
ke manner. A man that perceuyth not whis-  
he is in honour / may be compared unto  
brute and rude bestes / furdermore moch  
bytternes is mengled with the plesure of  
the world and the flesche / such pleasure  
also is oftentimes acquisyte / and gotten  
both with great expensys and daungere /  
prepared with sore labou / and yet they

F. repente

### The lyke

repent at length. Therfore Salomon sayd youth and voluptuousnes be but vanities. And further his he sayde. I wyl go and swyme in delyte and walow in ryches / & yet I perceyed that all was but vanity. Therfore in this present lyke graunt to vs to take repentaunce / let vs endeuer our selfe vnto the actes of penitence / let vs also euer absteyne from wildnes of hart vanity / & obstatnate lybete. ¶ Of conuenient apparayle of mynystres of the church / especyally of regulars / & of theyr mayfold exesse in garnitures / & of the despise therof to be auoided.

### The xi. Article.

**T**HE more vertuous y<sup>e</sup> the mynystres of the church are bound to be in respecte of play people / the more symple mche / & ful of good example they ought to be in theyr apparayle. They ought in lyke maner to obserue thyng that is red in the boke of Ecclesiasticus / that is to say. Thou shalt not reioure at ony tyme in thyne apparayle espeially in such maner of apparayle as may geve euyll occasyon or pleasauntly intyle or moue the chyrches or hertes of wome that behold it / that is to say / they be always bound to beware of curiouose arrayment.

of prestes.

impious apparel. And wherc also hol-  
ly fathers as Jerome & Chrysostome &  
other do not only testyfye this of the bus-  
also of every saythfull creature sayenge  
thus. A man or a woman garnysshynge  
themself / by theyr deckyng & trayning  
prouokynge the eyes of other vpon them  
althoough therof no myschyef doth ensue  
yet he or she so doyeng shal suffer eternal  
punisshement/because they dyd pnt forth  
poyson/yf there had bc any man y<sup>e</sup> wold  
haue dronke it that is to say they dyd  
shewforth temptacyon yf any man wold  
haue be attempted. If this abhomyna-  
cyon be so detestable among the lay peo-  
ple/it is much more mischewous amoge  
the ministres of the churche/ which pri-  
tually be bound to edifie other creatures  
in vertue. Therefor (seing they go so gor-  
geously) deckid as though it were a bride  
we may say as sait Bernard said behold  
how they go gaenysshydlyke to a bryde y<sup>e</sup>  
were comyng forth of her weddng châ-  
ber/insomuch that yf ye se ony such ferre  
from you/ ye wolde rather iudge it to be  
the bryde than the prest that shulde her  
marie. Surely accordyng to the wittyn-  
ne of holy fathers then be as well com-  
maundyd to be contentyd with symple

F. II.      apparel

### The lyfe

apparayle/as wyth symple fare. Therof  
the holy Apostle sayth thus. Be ye in no  
wyse conformatable vnto this world / but  
be perrenewed in y<sup>e</sup> spirite of your mynd  
Therefore a regular or a prest ought to be  
ware of al curiosyte/pompe/superfluyte  
vanpte/and wantones of al worldly gat-  
mentes/as the holy Doctours and pre-  
lates/ Basilius/ Idorus & other / haue  
vs enformed. But now concerninge this  
matter / the ruleys and estatutes whiche  
sprange by the diwynne inspiracyon shuld  
be consyderyd. For why it is red in the  
seuenth synode/ and also in the.xxi.decre  
as here folowyth. All braggyng/rufflig  
and garnyshynge is the thyng that is  
moste faire from holy ordre/ and it beho-  
uyth such Bishopes and Clerkes whi-  
che dresse them selfe in bright gloriouſ  
& plesant apparayle/ to amende it/for if  
they remayn in weyng therof they shal  
be put to penaunce. In semblable wyse al  
such maner of men that vse oyntemetes  
such cursyd people also whiche haue the  
in detryson that be clothed in pore and  
relygious ornamenteſ/shalbe correctyd  
by empriſonment. In the olde tyme cert-  
ly a holy man(that is to say) a man con-  
ſtitute in holy ordres dyd lede his lyfe  
beynge

of prestes.

beynge couertyd with a veray byle and  
meane garmet. And truly euery garmet  
that is not taken for necessyte/but for cb  
lynnes( as Basilius sayeth ) hath a spycce  
of pryde : moreouer Pope zacharye dyd  
institute this that folowyth. Byshoppes  
prestes and Decanes may wre no secu  
lar apparel/but garmentes conuenient  
for theyz ordre. They may not presu  
me to walke in ony cyte compyne way or  
streete without theyz towlyng or couertyn  
ges except it be in some long iornay / for  
lyke as a woman prayeng in the church  
barched/accordyng unto the sayenge  
of thapostle doth dishonest her owne hed  
even sooo prestes or regulars wandeinge  
abrood without theyz towles or other up  
per garmentes dishonest theyz prestes  
and religyon/ wherfore it is ordained y<sup>e</sup>  
þt any of them do stubbornly presume to  
transgresse the sayd institutes / that he  
shuld be expulsyd from the religyous cb  
gregation/unto the tyme that he had ful  
fillyd such thynges that were ordeyned  
by the same estatutes for the same pur  
pose . Innocentius the second agreethe  
with the same sayeng thus we comaund  
that as wel byshope/ as prestes and cler  
kes shall the self endeuor to pacifye god

F. iii. and

The lyfe

and man/ both in they; spiritual estate &  
also in they; corporal behauour/ & not in  
superfluyte cuttyng gardyng or colore  
of garments / nother they shall offend or  
hurt by they; hauyng the aspecte of the  
beholderes whose rule and example they  
ought to be/ but rather they shuld obser-  
ue holynes whiche wold much better be  
comme them. Here also sayth saynt Ber-  
nard. That it is the synne of sacryledge/  
where as the goodes of poore people be  
not distrybute/ unto them. For the eccle-  
siastical goodes be the patrimonye and  
heritage of the poore people. And what  
someuer the mynystres of the church do  
take besydys they; symple and necessary  
fode and apparayle it is vppolently stolen  
frō the poore people as cruel sacryledge  
And god ordeyned not that such as my-  
nystre the gospell/ shuld therby desyre ty-  
ches or apparaille/but that they shuld be  
contentyd to lyue with necessary fode &  
apparaille/ & not to seke prouocatiō vnto  
pleasure of the body/not to recepue suchē  
apparayle wherwith they myght be tri-  
myd/but such wherewith they myght be  
coueryd. But nowe whan a man may be  
contentyd with suchē a necessarie lyving  
what creature in this world wold enter

of prestes.

In to relygyon to that intent that he wold  
gather together kepe and dyspend the  
lypendes of the clergye in to usses of ple  
sure curysye and vanyte. Hercof agay  
ne spckyth that blesyd saynt Bernard  
sayunge thus. The nakyd and hungry  
do cry and complain on this facyon.  
what auaylyth unto vs miserably verid  
with hungry and cold / the great chaung  
of garmentes that lye in preslys and are  
eten of Mothis. It is ours that ye con-  
sume and wast / it is cruelly stolen from  
vs / that ye unprofitably and wychild-  
ly dyspend. O ye curyous and delectable  
persones ye haue wherewith we myght  
be refresched / and we pore people can nos  
synde wherwith we shuld be susteigned.  
And furdermore god mosse ryghtwysse  
and sappent made al wodly goodes co-  
myn to euery man hauynge nede / and  
that euery man shulde conueniently vse  
them accordyng to his estate / sooth that  
as towchynge / the vse / all temporall  
goodes shulde be in commune / although  
that concernyng the ryght and tytle of  
possessyng & dyspensyng of them / some  
men haue propertye in some goodes.

The lyfe

And as saynt Thomas affirmyth in his boke callyd Secunda seclide/in this maner what soever any man superfluously conuersayth to his owne use/ or what so ever he reseruyngh nygardly/ or geteth im moderately/he steyngh it away from the poore people/ and incurreyph the synne of these v<sup>e</sup> robbery / ye and the daungere of other greuous cruelte as wilhelm<sup>v</sup> patricius & Ulrich<sup>v</sup> dth de wyttincelle and declare. For this purpose also y<sup>e</sup> blesyd Father Ambrose makyngh protestacyon of that thyng that is had in the decre in the xvii. distinction/ in the chapitre begynnyng sicut hi / In this maner of wyse whe thic god be so lust / so unequalle to distri bute the sub sydyes and sustynaunce of lyfe( that is to say) that thou shuldyst be rych and abundaunt & other veray poore and nedys / O dyd he suffer it to be so/ to thentent that thou myghts haue a pise of his lyberalite/ and to glorihe another thorough the vertue of pacience or sufferaunce/ but thou therefore receiuyng the gyftes of god/ & bestowyngh them to thy nowne use/thynkyst thou dost nothyng unrightly/ y<sup>e</sup> thou alone do obteygne or re serue the substauencc of lyfe of many creatureys. O what creature can fynde in  
is hart

of priesles.

is herte to be so vnecharitable and so contous to dyspende the norgement of so many pore people/ not only to his owne pypuate wſe/ but also to his great habundauice deylte and pleasure. And truly it is no leſſe synne to take away from hym that hath/ than to denye the nedys whan a man is habundaunt and may geue.

That thou withholdyſt is the fode & bred of them that be hfygry. Thynē apparayle that thou putylſt vp is the clothynge of them that be nakid. Thy money which thou hydylſt in the erthe/ and dyſt enclose in thy cofre is the beray redemptions of men beyng in calamyte myſterie & captiuyte. Therfore thou mayſt knowe howe thou walowylſt in the goodes of other men / and howe prosperous thou art in respecte of them / and yet wylt not leue or depart with them / with this thynge especially y<sup>e</sup> ſayeng of Basili<sup>o</sup> aggreith. If thou wylt confesse that the temporal ryches came to thy handes by the gyfte of god/ shall god therfore be reputed vnu-  
mūl/ for dysirbutynge the goodes unto vs/ not indeſerably/ by cause thou haſt to muche s another bath to lytell. Nay but to therſt that thou shuldylſt obteigne of a iuste dispensacion/ & that they neþabout

J.b.      Chuld

### The lyfe

Shuld berewardyd for his pacynce it is  
the bide of the hungry that thou with-  
holdyst the cote of the bare that thou ke-  
pest in preucy chamber / the shoge of the  
bare sole that tarrysh in thy house / the  
money of the nedye that thou possedist in  
the eth and coteris. Therfor thou doste  
great iniury to so many poore people as  
thou art able to geue or lende unto. Let  
my masters the regulars and mynisters  
of the churche to whom one benefyce is  
not competent and sufficient mache wel  
this. Let such note and consydere the ne-  
cessite of the poore people that haue soo  
many precious gacmettes and fures ly-  
eng in theyr chambers / that make theyr  
gold and syluer theyr god / and treasour  
that voluptuously and sumptuously do al-  
hayes of theyr lyte costume & wast it. Let  
them loke howe they can make accompt  
therof unto the hgh iudge of heue / who  
se membris they dayly suffer to perisshe  
by hunger / thyriste / nakednes / and cold to  
whom also they geue nothee harborow  
nor beddyng. Therol also it is spoken  
in the boke callyd, Summa vieturum et  
bitiorum in this wylde. Mynisters of the  
churche do greeuously and many maner  
of wayes offend in theyr apparayle.

XVII

of prestes.

First in the exceeding p<sup>r</sup>eciousnes ther<sup>e</sup>  
of. Secondarily in tendernes. Thridly  
in curiosenes. Fourthly in superfluyte  
therot. For as blessed Iohan the Bap-  
tyst sayth who so hath two cotes that is  
to say / one that he hath no nede of / let  
him geue it to one that hathe none .

Therefore rympyng / and deckynge/ ap-  
parayle is to be auoyded of regulars &  
mynisters of the church / which before is  
towched in the fourth chapitre that they  
shuld were close garmetes not ouer long  
nor short / and also there it is prohibyte  
that in nowys they may were red or gre-  
ne clothe except in theyr ornametes per-  
teyng to dyvyn securite. Furdermore  
it is red amōg the myracles of gloriouse  
saynt Jerome that a certayne cardynal  
namyd Andreas beying dede shulde haue  
ben eternaly condemned/except saint Je-  
rome by intercessyon had obteigned the  
restoryng agayne of the bodye unto the  
soule / to do penance and satylaccyon in  
this present lyfe / & especially forbycause  
he meruelously excedyd in his apparay-  
le yet notwithstanding otherwys he  
was a veray chaste and cleane man and al-  
so endyd with many goodes and com-  
mendable vertues.

Thas

The lyfe

**C**That in nowyse women may dwelle  
with regulars or mysters of  
the church constute in holy  
ordres except they be ve  
ray old and nice of  
kyntede.

**T**he. xii. Article.

**C**HAPTER XII. **E**tymologie is the  
maistres of trewth. Therfor  
what nedyth it manifoldly to  
proue that thyng that expy-  
ence thewth. For evidently it apperyth by  
good profe/ how many and enorme my-  
steres hewe/burkefull occasyons hewe  
great ruyne and dysformyte ( worthy to  
be lamentyd) haue sprong by the reason  
of the cohabytacion and dwellynge of  
women with prests and regular persons  
in somuch that now from the crowne of  
the heede to the sole of the fote there is in  
a maner no helth( that is to say) betwix the  
highest unto the lowyst in a maner no  
creutes or chastryte. But it is as the pro-  
phet Daues hath prophesayed. That soyn-  
tacion and adiuoutey hath swymmyd al  
about wherby it appetith how daunge-  
rous such cohabytacions is and worthy  
to auoyde/ with hewe great reason also  
and

of prestes.

and discrecyon/holy fathers popes/bys  
shopes/and other in many generall cou-  
celles haue the same prohibyted . And  
truely the moxe straely and behemelty  
that it is prohibyte unto high and noble  
prelates the moxe dysobedience contēpe  
and negligence is in them ys it be not a-  
noyded . Therfore certayne deccres of the  
generall councelles of popes / bysshopes  
& other be veray necessary to be touchyd  
and spokyn of to declare how sagely / ho  
ly and dyscrete fathres haue abhortyd /  
prohibyte and vterly excludyd this for  
seyd cohabytacyon / or dwellynge with  
women . It is rede that concernyng this  
matter/it was fully prouyded at the cou  
cell of Magistryne . That no prest or clerc  
he shulde kepe or retayne any women  
wherby eynill suspicyon myght be had  
betwene them/noz yet such maner of wo  
men as they; rulys wole graunt them/  
that is to say/that mother/ auntes/ or sy-  
ster/for by the the insygacyon of the de  
crys it hath be perceyvd that abhomynas  
ble offence hath be don with them/or elis  
with they; waytyng maydens . But the  
creyntnes of this decree was afterward  
somewhat losyd as touchyng veray olde  
women & nere kynnyssfolke vpon whom  
nature

The lyfe

nature or age wyl not suffre any synynge  
ffor aete to be suspectyd. Hereupon In  
nochtyngh the thysd brytyng to a certayn  
bypshop sayth. That ye ought not  
to suffre women to inhabite with clerkes  
except suche( as before is sayd) in whom  
the law of nature wyl no euyl suspecte.  
There also the blesdyd pope Gregori  
sayth in this wyse / we wyl and forbyd  
that clerkes prestes or regulares be not  
conuersant no; dwellyng with women /  
except with theys mother/syster/ or such  
other. This red and also dyscussyd in the  
registe that blesdyd Augustyne bpd not  
agree that one shuld be in houle with his  
owne sister sayenge thus . Suche as be  
with my syster be not my systers . There  
fore that understandyng of so great a let  
tred man ought to be an instrucciō unto  
us. Hapay pope Gregori sayeth agayne that  
it is declaryd in the decree in the. lxxii.  
bystacyon/ how it behouyth that prest  
nes to whom the people of god be com  
myntryd do sudstacyally attēd bpd i theyz  
lorde stotte that it be not deuowryd of  
denyss norther I ought to kepe sylenie i  
that chyng that I do shew unto you with  
great lamētacyon and sadnes. For I do  
perceue prestes inhabityng with women/  
whiche

of prestes.

Whiche is an abominable thyng to be  
had or spoken of contrary to the stat-  
utes of theyz holy rulys and ordynaunc-  
ess. For lcke where suche cohabitation  
is / therre lackyng no prouocation or at-  
temptyng of our enmye the devyl. Ther-  
for they ought to be seuerid lest the traw-  
de of the invisible enmye disrye them so  
that (according to the wordes of the As-  
tistic) our service may not be despised /  
for he sayth thus. we prestes ought to be  
ware of all vnlawful actes / that we may  
lyte by cleane handes vnto al my ghyt god  
(which sayth) be you holy for I am holy  
And truly of ony man presumpthyng to do  
contrary / let hym be excludyd from the  
honour of presthode. Furdermore it is  
indured in the actes of the generall coun-  
cill of Nicc in this wyse. Aboue al thyng  
the generall councell forbyddeth that it  
is not lawful to any bishop/prest/decan  
or subdecon/nor to ony other in the cler-  
gy to have or kepe any woman in his  
bowste ( that is to saye ) to inhabyte or  
dwell with ony woman ( as Etatianus  
expoundyng in the Rubrikes ) crepte  
with the mother/sister or aunte or with  
such persones as wyl annoyd suspycyon.

The

### The lufe

The veray same thynge was comandyd in the Councell of Carthagio for there Sciricius then Pope sayd. we wyll suste no other women to be in the houses of clerkes but suche as the holy counsell of Nice hath sufferyd to inhabite with them/for certaine causes only of necessyte. Moreauer holy fathers dyd not only prohibyte cohabytacyon with women/ but also suspectyous visitacyon and comunycacyon with them. This also is conteigned in the syxth synode or councell. It is conuenient to be obseruyd of al clerkes/that they never compyn and talke with a woman exceptat a conuenyent tyme and place/to the entent that all myschewous suspecyon may be auoyded. Surely no maner of religyon may permitt suster them to come to gether alone. This is also rehersed in the syxth councell Affrykan. Clerkes or chaste men may in nowysse resort to wydwones or virgyns except by the comandement of byschopes or preestes / and yet they shall not alone/ but they shal go with theyr clerkes or with other whiche the byschop or preest hym selfe may not vnto wome alone resort for fere of suspecyon. Therfore pope Lutius saith. A cleke shal not go alone without

of prestes.

Without his superiors comandment vnto  
the howse of a woman. And a prest and a  
woman may in nowysse talke to gether  
alone. Nor the Archdeane may vnder  
the coloure of humlynte or of his offyce /  
oftentymes entre into the howses of wo  
men / nor sende any thyng to the good  
wyf pnewely by theyr scotess / or howse  
hold seruantes . For ys that he comys  
tyd and knownen / he shalbe deposyd from  
his office. And he shalbe suspandyd from  
the graces of the churche. Therefore by  
cause prestes are sufferyd to cohabyte and  
dwell with women that he of theyr kyn  
nes / it is to be supposed that no other  
prophybylyd women ought to inhabyte  
with theyr kynneswomen .  
And for that cause prestes and regulars  
cohabityng with theyr mothers or kyn  
neswome must take heed that no estrange  
women dwell with theyr kynneswomen  
except they be betay olde and agyd .  
Hysinge also this cohabytacion is soo  
straptly prophybpted / that no prest or  
clerk although he were chaste in dede  
ought suche cohabytacion to admitt for  
any hope of temporall auantage whi  
che thyng he wyll surely fulyll / yf he  
have any preter personre religioun vns

The lyfe

der hym whiche he ought to ouersee.  
And althought it were sure / that he shulde  
nouer be prouyd of the part of the wome  
yet it ought to be searched/less y<sup>e</sup> woman  
be prouyd of his part.

**T**hat chasteitie of body and cleenes  
of hart do pryncipally becom  
the prestes and regu  
lars.

**¶ The.xiii.Article.**

**S**IC IT IS/that no man may  
please God or obteynе blyffe/  
without cleenes of hart info  
mych/that our sauour sayth.  
Blessed they that be cleene of hart for  
they shall se the face of god. Whereof also  
Salomon sayth. He that louyth clea  
nes of hart shall have a kyng to his fren  
de. Whereof in lyke manner the Apolle  
sayd / unto the kyng of wuldres immor  
tal and mynible on this latoryn. Every  
seythfull Christien man is bounde to tha  
kyte, other brygnall/ contugall/or bidu  
all/ or to suche chasyte that is abaynen  
ce from all unlawfull congesyon. Fur  
thermore the mynystres of the churche be  
many

of prestes,

many wyses bounde unto chastyte.  
Fyrst by cause in theyre syre consecra-  
tion / or promotion to holy ordres / they  
haue straightly by vowe & promyse bound  
the selue unto chastyte. And as it is copy-  
ously declaryd in theyre decreee . No man  
ought to be promoted unto presthode /  
nor yet to take vpon hym any holy or-  
dres that be infector unto presthode / ex-  
cept he do promyse and vowe chastyte /  
and that chastyte is not only outwardly  
promysed / but also inwardly / insomuch  
that they bpayd them selfe to obserue all  
the holy rulys and deccrees of the same .  
For verely a vowe doth more substantia-  
tially bynd than an othe / as saynt Ido-  
mas in his boke callid Secunda secunde .  
Iohannes Bartholomeus and other / do  
wytnesse / and as Alestrandee / Bonancen-  
tua and other / that do wryte vpon the  
fourth boke of ye sentence sayen . A vowe  
by religyous professyon and takyng of  
holy ordres / is solemnysyd & made verry  
solemne in effecte whiche also strongly  
byndyth a man to the performing therof  
so lykewise vnto spiritual coulson in  
somuch that it doth not only prohibyt & let  
them to contract matrimony / but also  
dissolueth and breakeþ that matrimo-

B.ii.      uy that

### The lyfe

ny that is alredy contracted/sor in suche  
a solemne boþe a man þromyseth not  
only to do well and eschew evyl/but also  
he muſte fulfyll his boþe in scuerynge  
þy whole from wordly and carnall thyng-  
ges and also in applynge dyuine & sp̄ys-  
tialiall thynges . Theretoþ preþtes regu-  
lars & other in the takyng of holy orðres  
þey geue and offer them selfe to god / to  
the entit that they wyl do hym þeyful  
and delygent seruyce / and therfore þey  
be consecrate to þeyr maker/and orðred-  
ned to be his mynystres . The violent ta-  
kyng and þurpyng of other mennes  
goodes/is theste/þf it happen to be done  
þreueli . And truly robbrye openly done  
and also the abusyon of holy thynges is  
callid sacrylege . Also robbing or spoy-  
lyng of thyngs consecrate unto god may  
be very well iudged sacrylege . Therfore  
preþtes and mynystres of the church do-  
yng fornicacyon do comyt sacryledge /  
sacryleger/ þe sacryledge and hyghe rob-  
rye / in withdrawyng them selfe from  
the service of god/from the actes of cle-  
ness/and shamefull obeyeng and geuyng  
them selfe to al maner of sowle synkyng  
and abhomynable byce & carnall desyre.  
Wherfore þfelijng or robbing of a cha-  
litys

of prestes.

Icys be an horryble therst and sacryledge  
muche more abhomynable is the syop-  
lyng or corruptyng of a reasonable cre-  
ature offeryd/consecrate and geuen vnto  
god/ as prestes be. Secondaryl chalste-  
pynccally belongeth vnto mynisters  
of the churche/ for this cause. For as ho-  
ly Dionisius sayeth. The lowest of hygh  
ordre/ and the hyghest of the lower ordre  
owght to be agreeable and lyke/ now the  
lowest of the hygh hyperarchy or ordre is  
the company of holy aungeles. And the  
hyghest in the lower ordre of the church  
myntauant is the ordre of prestes and  
clerkes wherfore the prophet Malachie  
callith a preste by the name of aungell/  
for it is sayd. The lippes of a preste  
dothe kepe lernyng/ and the people  
shall loke for theyr lawe out of his  
mouth/ for he is the aungel of the lord of  
hostes. Prestes therfore and Clerkes are  
bound to lyue purely/ & chastly lyke au-  
ngeles/but they agaynst all ryghtwysnes  
do mordynatly synne/ledyng theyr lyfe  
in carnall fylth & bestly desyre. Theyd  
lybycause they be in the place and stede  
of god/ & as the vicars of god. Therfore  
they are straightly bound to lyue godly/ &  
not bestly & fylthyslyc / or els they do gres-

W.m. uouilly

The lyfe

Woully offend agaist the charyte of god.  
Forthly forby cause they be set in high  
dygnite & had in greateſt honour for ye  
loue of god/ therfore they ought to be ac  
ceptable to god/ & to serue hym in cleſces.  
Fiftly forby cause they may please god  
reconſyle other unto god/ and clence the  
that be vncleſe / therfore they are bound  
to please god with charyte and cleſces.  
And where ſaint Bernward ſayeth wo be  
to the chyldren of the deuyll whiche not  
keþnge reconſyled themſelue / hath take  
upon them the offyce to econſyle other/  
as though it were people that had done  
rightwysnes. And alſo the aƿotlie aby  
myſt the ſame ſayeng thus. They that  
be in fleſhe( that is to ſay ) they that lyue  
euerallie can not please god. In the boke  
alſo of Ecclesiasticus thugit iſ ſayd. Of  
an vncleſe chyng whet may be made  
clene. And in the xiij. chappitre of the pro  
phet Naum. It is wriþten thus. The pe  
ple were cleſyd & than they made clene  
the people. The ſycre forby cauſe they  
take/ haudoll/ & recue holi chynges/ &c  
that chyng that is holi of all holi/ who  
the ſayeth hymſelue. I am the lyuyng  
weide that deſcendyd fro heuyn. And fur  
thermore.

of prestes.

Vermore yf it were so straughtly prohibyt in  
Moises law that no brenene yson shulde  
eate of certe or thouche any fleshly/or best  
ly facyfye / holwe cursyd & mylcheuous  
be they before the face of god/ whiche ha  
take handell and put forth ta other / the  
veray body/ & blode of our sauour Christ  
and ouly he gatten sonne of god/ and per  
they remayne in they; abominationis  
wyngs wychedly and felychly/ & geuyng  
euill occasyon to other/ byd not god by  
the mouth of Moises comand that no  
prest shuld presume to impreste unto god  
except he were sanctyfied. And also that  
a man brynging brenene shulde not offer  
hred unto god. And in a nother place in  
corrupt soule which had eaten of the sacref  
ice of good creatures shulde perwylle stō  
amōg the people. And further i the fyre  
booke of kynges in the xxxi chappel it is  
told that abyshop sayd unto Dauid i this  
myse. I have no vnbawyd hred / but  
only holy hred / and of the chldren and  
seruantes be cleno especially from wo  
men / let them eate it / ye the prestes of  
the old lawe in the tyme of theri offyce/  
and sacrefysce were commaundyd to ab  
steigne from they; lawfull wyngs.

B.iii. Therefore

### The lyfe

Therefore holwe great myschyfe cursydnes and vnhumanitnes is among prelgs and clerkes whiche (walowyng in they) towle & abhempnable fylthynes do handell the most worthy and precuous sacramentes. Doth ther not (thynde you) haue ge ouer they? heedes an infyuite & more than a painfull ponyntment. God knowþ. The seuenþ is forð þcause they be the eyes in the mystical body of the hole churche and truly a lypyll spot or offence is veray hurtfull to the epe. The eyghe forð þcause they be the glasse into whome the lay people shalwe directe thcy? eyes/ whiche glasse ought to be veray cleare & ryght. Thereras þbecause the carnalite of them is so abundaþ / to the great iniurye and contynþ of almyghty god / and grymþ so culþ occasion unto the people / and also is moþe hurtful than can be sup posed unto all such offenders / for it blitþ bith and haþenþ them in byce and in conclusyon damnerþ them. It makþ also suche vyle and cursyd creatures / to be despysed vsdayned and hated both of god & man. Farthermore after the meaþinge of wilhelmus parisiensis & other doctours / such mynisters haue no ryght to the goodes of the church which be deputed

of prelates.

puted to the membris and soldyars of Christ. And what soever they do usurpe and spend of the patrimonye of Christ it is veray theste and robbrye. They be also straightly bound to restytucion of all suche goodes as they dyspend amouge doxes or harlottes or other fylthy persones/behold therfore howe synfull & dan- gerous the lyfe of wanton and lecherous mynisters is. Therfore let them refrayne from the snares & gpanes of the dyuell / let thē also feare the great hepe of peryll and daunger that hungryth ouer them selis we may say to them as it is sayd in scripture. The people be without couisell and wysdome / wolde to god they woldes ware wylle & vnderstanding that they myght prepare to auoyde daunger in tyme to come.

¶ Of the peryll and impouydence of  
prelates and regulars dwellyngs  
with women/gatheryd ouer  
of the sayenges of ma-  
ny holy men.

¶ The xiii. Article.

¶ b. They

## The lyfe

**R**o<sup>t</sup>e y do lyue mortally (as  
saynt Augustyn sayth) which  
put forth them selfe to syfpe  
of debate. And tculp that ma-  
deth cleue contrary to wpsde  
me (whereto we be bound as well as to  
charite and misericorde) which presumyeth to  
pale mynghe a brydge / from the whiche  
scancly one amonge an hundred bath  
escaped without fallyng in/or drawnyng.  
In this case what man can say / but be-  
dyd he cap folyschly and was verry bar-  
reigne of my soome / so put hymselfe into  
great perill much rather may vnythe  
last presles or regulares be countyd foiles  
which contrarie to them la we well cou-  
bat and dwell with women from whom  
scancly one amog a thousand shall escape  
wthout great peryl and daungeere. And  
ys perauenture some do fortune to eschew  
the somes a felichy not hit selfe vccayd we  
can escape varelyng amysg naeyn euill  
prouocacion vna wth full consens and sen-  
sualyty therof / wherefore they ought in  
nowysse to choasyte / or dwell wth any  
woman (except she be verry aged / or ot  
therys myngd knowydge) nor shalynge to be-  
hold any woman / nor to haue any oposi-  
tione of hym / nor place to comyt any  
evyll accide wth her. How be it yf he were

of prestes.

such a one as were of synguler goodnes/  
exercized and ride in the feare of god &  
al maner of vertue aboue the comon sorte  
of men/it were not possyble that he shuld  
by any mean creede/or be entangled with  
any sache carnall desyre/or eny wylde de-  
mouyd from the purpose of chasyte. Is  
it not verry daungerous for a man not  
yet exercysed nor estabylshed i grace &  
vertue/to inhabyte/or dwel with a wo-  
man that is prophalte. Let every prest  
and clereke therfore take hede that no wo-  
man selidome or never do ons enter into  
thei houses/for who so euer byspylled  
the walkes/or steppes of womē can not  
inhabyte with god with a cleane and hole  
hart. For a woman inflamyth the consci-  
ens of hym with whom she dwelld.  
Thou shalt never dispute/or haue comon  
ynsayyon of the behyde of women. Bus  
yl thou perceue a womā in good conuer-  
sacion loue her with spirituall affection  
and not w<sup>c</sup> corporall bysayyon. Ther-  
for it is comandyd unto prestes & clerkes i  
the xxviii. distynction that they shuld a-  
uoyd ouermuch familiarite w<sup>c</sup> they li-  
solue inhabityng w<sup>c</sup> the fundermore as  
saynt Jerome saith. The sharpest forme  
tes of hell be reserued unto prestes and  
clerkis boþeng for mysayyon & fedder this

### The lyfe

wo be to the beying a prest that hast kyff  
the daughter of venus with the same  
mouth whch whom a lytyll before thou  
dydyst receue the sonne of the Wyrgyn  
Mary. O cursyd Judas that with a kys  
se dost berray the sonne of man. Therfor  
also gloriuous saynt Jerome beyng in  
the extrempye of dethe in the presence of  
the blessed bodye of our lord spake vnto  
Christe sayeng thus. wo be to them that  
receue the unworþyly / for truly they do  
cruçypye the agayne to theyz great cons-  
demnation and punyshment. Alas good  
lord what shall I say / for bycause prestes  
do eate the in the altare / as it were the  
fleshe of byrdes or bestes on a table / by-  
cause also in the nyght they vse fylthy co-  
gressyon with women / erly in the mor-  
nyng in theyz celebracion they do receive  
the and eate the. Than good lord where  
art thou hyd dost thou slepe or wake /  
Is such seruyce accepted of ther / Is that  
the sacryfycē and oblation whiche thou  
despyyst. Behold the world is full of pre-  
ste's and yet ther is scantly one amonc  
an hundreth that is good and welþy po-  
syd. There is in the world none so cruell  
a beste as an euyll and wanton prest /  
for he dyd saynþ to be correctivys in no-  
wys

of prelles.

wylle wylle suffer to here the treuth. Ther  
fore in the person of Chryste spekyng  
sayut Augustyne in this wyle. O thou  
preste torment me nomore with thy nes-  
fences / for the wound of thy synne hur-  
tyth me more (that is to say) byspleasyth  
me more / than the wound of my syde.

Thou dost synne more greuously which  
offendyst me raynyng in leyn with thy  
fornicacyon / and my body & blod vncer-  
tently handelyst / geuyng euill occasyon  
and example unto my people / for whose  
helth I dyd vouchsafe to be crucified on  
a crosse / than they which also crucifyed  
me walkyng on the erth. Therfor o thou  
preste here holy saynt Bernard ethor-  
tyng and enformynge the sayeng thus.  
O thou preste thy mouth is dayly made  
the reuer / and as ye wold say the sepul-  
ture of the blessed body of Chryst. Ther-  
fore why doth that mouche euer lye / why  
wilt it ever speke lecherously why is that  
soule and mynd of thyne made vytious.  
wherfore do thyne yes behold vanytes /  
whiche euer day on the altare hath be-  
fore them / Christe hym selfe the hyghe &  
everlastynge trewth / why puttyst thou  
forth thy handes unto thynges vnlaw-  
full and vncleane / whiche do handell most  
precious

The lyte  
precious and immaculate sacramentes /  
why stynnyngst thou in the dounhen stc  
mys of wyne / whiche drynkyng the blod  
of our sauour / & cuer oughtyst to be full  
of spiritual refreschynge. Is it not a fowle  
and myschewous acte for the / to handell  
the shameles bodies of harlotes with  
such handes as be geuen / and dedycate  
vnto god ye consecrate also with holy a-  
nointment / And with the same handes  
to touch the holy body of our lord Iesus  
Christ. O how wyched & presumptuous  
it is to handell the sonne of the Virgyne  
Mary / ye the only begotten sonne of god  
the father / and hym to receue with so ful  
thy a mouth whiche excellyth and ouer  
cummyng all understandyng. what man  
wolde not be aballyd to se the most pre-  
cious treason in the worlde to be cast in  
to a doungbyll. For truly a Lecherous  
prest is more fulþy than any butt / or  
clay / and more stynkyng and corrupt  
than any syne / or drawght furdermore  
as saynt Iecome sayeth / and as it is red  
in the decree / no man ought for to eate  
of the easter lambe / or to be receyvd to  
the communyon at such tyme as he kno-  
with his wyfe.

**C**The cause wherof saynt Thomas &  
other

of pitties.

other upon the fourtyn dñe o f sentence )  
have wolyd sayeng thus / that althowgh  
the carnall acte in wedlocke may be done  
without synne / yet by the pleasure and va-  
nitiuosnes therinto annexed / it plockyth  
and withdrawith a mans mynd fro de-  
uoeyon . Therfore if it be not lawfull for ma-  
ryed folke / whiche may vse the bodily ex-  
cupacyon without synne / to receyue thy-  
maker / where the nyght before they ha-  
ue carnally knownen yche other . Howe-  
ever abhomynable do these preses which con-  
mytting concyayon in the nyght / pre-  
sume to celebrazate in the day . Surely it  
may be concyayd by no understandyng  
nor by any tong it may be expiessed how  
inordynatly such do offend whiche beynge  
polluted with so solewe vpe / do presume  
to handel and recyeue the most pure and  
heuenly mysteryes of Christ / and to pro-  
nounce the most holy wordys of the masse &  
canon therof with so corrupt a mouth .  
Therefore of suche thynges spekyth the  
vygd iudge Christ hymself by the mouth  
of the pþbet Deas sayeng thus . I wyl  
correcce the at my pleasure / and thus be  
holde I wyll smere the as it were a berte &  
lyones that had lost theyr whelpes and  
wyll destroye the inward parte of them  
& also wyll colume the as it were a lyon .

The lyfe

Than as the Prophet David in his psalmes sayth. He wyl speke vnto them in his angre/and wyl bere and trouble them in his furor. He wyl thrust them in to a fornace of fyre in tyme of his wrath: they shall haue no rest in theyz mystry. And as the prophet Ezechiel spekyneth. Beholde I haue clappyd my handes at theyz malyce. Can yow haire susteyne or your handes preuaile in the tyme of my punysshement: And thus I wyl blow you and brenne you in the fyre of furor/ and you shalbe blowen in the myddis of a fornace & than I wyl ceasse/ of whom also god by the Prophet Amos god spekyneth in this wylle. Beholde I wyl grate vpon you/as a wayne wyl grate that is laden with hevy. And nowe by the Prophet Malachias the word of god is spokyn unto prestes that pollute and corrupt his name in this wylle. I wyl cast vpon you the fyltes of your ceremonies/ and it shall take you with it ( that is to say ) I wyl impute vnto you/your owne fylthy & fleshly werkis/ & you shall fall together with your myschyef into the depe fiod of Acheron in hell. And the more intentyly ye were geuen vnto voluptuousnes and carnal despise/the more peynfully ye shal be boyngh.

of prestes.

be bornyd in most hote and wyld spye for  
evermore / in lyke maner as I haue spo-  
ken in the Apocalypsts / that is to say.  
The more they haue gloriyfied the selfe  
in delyte and pleasure / gne unto them so  
much the more payn and torment.

**C**On the same matter it apperyth in the  
reuelacions of saynt Kateryn  
the virgin of senis. And al-  
so of the holy wydome  
saynt brygyde.

¶ The xv. Article. ¶

**K**It is red in the boke of the wa-  
tayne & reuelacions of saynt  
Kateryn of senis that the e-  
uerlastyng fathur spake unto  
her in a vysyon in this wyse. The soule  
of wrechyd and carnall prestes / takyng  
great corruption of vycyng by theyz sensus-  
alyste. And furder thus I haue anoynted  
and consecrate them to the entent that  
they shuld serue me in holynes & iustice /  
and mynysterie sacramentes unto belouers  
and wottyst thou my welbelouyd dought-  
ter howe they reward me for my benefi-  
ciall goodnes : I wyl tell the howe.

**H.** They

The lyfe

They w<sup>e</sup> dayly persecute me with so many mylcheuous actes/that it is impossible for thy tonge to expresse it. And yf thou wdyt herethem all rehersed/ thou woldyst dye for veray sorrow/ yet I wyll shewe the some of them that thou mayst haue the more compasyon.

For verily they oughte to stand at the table of the moste holy croſſe therre incensauntly bryngynge in medytacion / of the bytter passyon of Christ/ and therre them selfe to fede with the foode of soules/ labouryng contynually for the helth of them / euen more rejoysyng in the spypuall prouer of them. But they go into taverneſ/ and therre they ſwere/ and ſtare/ tellynge wanton tales/ ſcrupyne Glotonie/ and Drunkenes / forgetynge they dyuyne ſcruppe / but yf they chaunce to ſay it/ they hartes not withstandyng be farre from me. They be full of myſcreable bypce/ as it were men blipudde in ſpynne / ye they wordes and dedes standyng alwayes of wantones/ they be not ashamed to offende openly/ they be veray rypbaides/ players/ and mochers. But after they haue played away they ſoules / so that it perclayneth to the bodye of the dyuell/ thā they play away the goodes of the

of prelates.

The churche / and to expende the substance  
whiche they take in the name and vertue  
of the blod of our sauour Christe /  
in thei swone pleasureys so that the poore  
people be nothyng holpen therwith .  
Another the churche hath necessarie orna-  
mentes / for they beyng the tem-  
ple of the dyuell / care not for my tem-  
ple and suche ornaementes as they shuld  
make in the churche / they make in thei swone  
houses / ye and do worse with is  
then that / for loke howe the bryde gro-  
me attyorth his bryde / ryght so these fles-  
hly dyuelles do attyre thei fleshly con-  
cubynes and perramours . And whan  
these unhappy dyuelles ( that is to saye )  
wanton prestes do passe vnto the altare /  
they be nothyng abashed to se thei con-  
cubynes or harlottes goynge with thei  
chyldren to do thei oblacyon with o-  
ther people . O ye dyuelles and wo : se  
then dyuelles / wolde to god pouer iniqui-  
te were more hyd vndre fote / for than is  
shuld do lesse hurt vnto the lay subiectes  
But nowe truly ye be the betay occasyon  
of abhomynable lyuyng . Is this  
the purye of cleenes that I desyde in a  
prelate .

H. ii.      Is this

### The lyfe

In this clernes whā he ryghtith with an  
unchast mynd with a corrupt & synkis  
bodye with whom all nyght he lay with  
his deyli or leman. O tabernacle of Be-  
hebub where is they welyspoused wat-  
chunge in the nyght whan contynually  
thou shuldyst be deuoute i prayere at whi-  
che tyme also ihou shuldyst vertuouslye  
dyspose they selfe to celebrayon on the  
morrow. Therfore of carnall delyte it cos-  
myth that these sylyng prestes do nother  
seke myne honour / the helth of the selfe  
nor yet of theyz neybours. They wyll  
not correcte also such as they haue curss  
charge of/ but of theyz owne propre and  
pryuate affection wherwith they be ens-  
lamed they coueite and despise worldy  
ryches pleasure of the body with whom  
yet they must haue temporall honoures  
delycate feastes and banketys precions  
superfluous and well trymmed garmen-  
tes of these prestes therfore this holy &  
innocent virgyn saynt Kateryne wrote  
many other thynges by the speche and  
reuelacion of god/ wiche be brought in/  
in another place.

**C**Moreouer there be many thyngs red  
of these prestes in the boke of the reuelation  
of the blesyd wydowe saynt Bry-  
gyde

of prestes.

gyde where amonc other Christ in a bi  
syone spake unto her on this facyd / was  
it not sayd by the prophet David howe  
they that haue eten my bread haue mag  
nified supplantacyon aboue me / peue so  
now I say to you. That syly & lechere  
prestes which eate my bread on the alcate /  
be veray traitours unto me. I behold y<sup>e</sup>  
Jewes & paynynms & I can seeue amog  
the none worse thā such prestes. Therefore  
of the veray seic of iustyce / I curse them.  
And cursyd be all thyngē that they take  
of the erth to theyz pfect o; susketacyons /  
forbycause they be so vnynd to god.  
Cursyd be theyz meate / and drinke whi  
che fedeth theyz bodyes to wōmes mea  
te and theyz soules to hel (that is to say)  
they kepe the soules in theyz bodyes to  
theyz damnacyons. Cursyd be the bodyſ  
of them/ whiche shall cysle and brenne in  
hell without end. Cursyd be the peres in  
whom they so viciously haue lpyen. Curs  
syd be that houre that begynneth to the  
inhell / shal never haue ende. Cursyd be  
y<sup>e</sup> eyes of the whiſt who they haue ſene  
the lyght of the fyrmament . Cursyd be  
the eares of the that hath hard my wor  
des/ and not fulfylled them. Cursyd be  
the taste of them wherewith they haue

H. III. perceuyd

The lyfe  
perceyed my gyttes. Cursyd be the tow-  
chynge of them / that haue touchyd me  
unworthly . Cursyd be the sauour of  
the that haue smellyd thynges for they  
owne delyght / and despysed me / that am  
most de leitable of all thynges . Amonge  
these cursyd prestes there rayneth coues-  
tysc auacyce clewth symony / hatered / ob-  
synacy / carnall pleasure / the loue of the  
world / and yet with worldly thynges  
shayp are not satysfyed . They preche my  
worde and semē to do many good thyng-  
es / but all is to theyr owne honouer and  
comodite . Holy sancte Brigitt reber-  
schē many mothynges lyke unto these  
whiche nowe for this purpose we haue  
sufficently touchyd bycause in the boke  
of the lyfe and rules of curates they be  
more largely declaryd .

¶ That regulars & all men constitute in  
holy ordres are bound to be vertuous & ho-  
ly gathered out of the sayēg of holy Die-  
nylius . ¶ The . rbi . Article .

**T**he holy & most dyuyne Dionysius /  
saith . That no man ought to pre-  
sume to be a ledet in ony dyuyne  
offise or scrypce / but such as be most lyfe-  
or veray nygde facyoned vnto god i ver-  
tue (that is to say) so wyle and vertuous  
that of the plētuousnes of the other may

of prestes.

be clensed lyghtened & with vertue reple  
upshed wherc vpon saite Thomas vps  
the fourth boke of sentence in the. triu.  
dysynctyon concludyng & Albertus affir  
myng the same. That wherc eucry man  
in holy ordres / is cōstitute a ldder & other  
dyngc matters / ys he presume to take  
vnworthly that ordre vpon hym / he  
synnyng dedly. In lyke maner he that is  
constitute in holy ordres / whether he be  
prest/decane/or subdecan/as ostentyme  
as he exectyth any acte of his holy o-  
rde vnworthly/so ostentymes he synnyng  
dedly/ as it were a man that had no cha-  
rte nor yet grace. The same thyng Du-  
tand<sup>r</sup> in his boke callyd summa raym-  
bus / Johannes Bonauentura and other  
agreably do affirme. Therefore holynes  
of lyfe is aswel required vnto the taking  
of holy ordre/ as to the execution and  
desynistracion of the same by cause of the  
cōmaundment & not by cause of the sacra-  
ment/herewith aggregyth the sayenge of  
that deuoute Dionysius in a certayn epi-  
ste whiche he wrote ad demophilū say-  
ing thus. Any man not weidissposyd nor  
beetuus/vnworthly executing thyngs  
that be holy shewyth hym to be veray  
presumptuous / and a man supposyng

H.iii. That

### The lyfe

that god is ignorant of that/that he knoweth  
wher( that is to say ) he shynkþ p' god  
( whom lyke a lyer he callid father) wher  
dote or mystrake his wretchednes or vice  
**I** wyll not say that such a on doth(lyke  
a Christen man) shew forth prayers / or  
orisons vpon the holy syngnes that is  
to say the sacramentes . Upon whiche  
wordes the doctours before rehersed do  
conclude/that such a prest/decane/or sub  
decane/ is taken as a blasphemour dece-  
uator & traptour vnto Christe. Therfore  
(seyng regulars be in some holy ordre)  
appertyth howe vertuous and clene they  
ought to be / and howe obediently they  
ought to execute theye offyces. wherby  
also they be bounde to geue good example  
vnto the people / and that theye neygh-  
bours shulde be partakers of the abun-  
daunce of theye vertu and grace. &c.

**C**Of the qualite of regulars gathered  
out of the sayenges of saynt

Bernard.

**¶** The. xvii. Article. **¶**

**T**he holy and cleci saynt Bernard/  
the louer of regular bretherne / a  
fauouter of the pablyk wele auoy-  
dour & assistour of the church/ oftentimes  
in his booke descrewyd and lamentyd  
the

of prestes.

the great tuyne / & decay of the churche.  
But amouge all other / especyally he be-  
waylych the lapse and fall of regulars.  
He sayeth also that Clerkes ( above all  
men) do pricypally usurpe and exercysye  
that thyng wherin is theyr delyte: and  
vitterly auoyde y<sup>e</sup> thyng that shulde be  
paynfull vnto the. And no dought every  
kynd of people hath some labours / some  
pleasure but now adapes ye may gue  
meruacle at the puyson of Clerks / how  
by a newe meanes they can dyscern the  
pleasure from the paine / choulyng & em-  
bracyng all thyng for theyr delyte / and  
vitterly auoidyng all thyng that is gre-  
uous and peynfull. They compare with  
soudars tusslers of the worlde in p<sup>r</sup>yde /  
noble apparaunce / trappyng of horses  
or mules / hutyng / halwyng / dyce / cat-  
des / ye thy begynne to counterfet wome  
in weryng preuous furres hangyng  
done on theyr neckes in swete odours  
in gloriuous garmentes ye in all maner  
of tendernes. Ful craftely they restrayne  
from weryng of harnes / frō watchyng  
all night in pauylpons / from sodcynes /  
skymysches.

**C** The husbandman swetyth the ke-  
per of the byncard byggyld / and deluyth  
H.b. And

The lyfe

And clerkes which lyt slaggysly in shenes at the fruteful tyme of the yere/ to comande theyr barnes to be stuffyd theyr butteryes to be replenyshed before the husbandme. They eate syne white bred. They drinke pure wine / they franke the with the fattenes of corne / they coueyt the sauour of straung and swete herbes. Marchaunter do sayle about the see in grete labour / both in daigere of body & lyfe gathering ryches that by wracke or mysaenture they may lese these are sore thynges. But ryche prestes wyl beware of them / for they wyl slepe in the meane space. I wyl not say they play y<sup>e</sup> wantons in theyr beddes/furdermore other craftesme geate theyr lyuyng with soze laboure/but idell clerkes wallowes swymme in ryches & pleasure without labour/or payne/but at the last whan al men shall aryste euer y man in his ordre/ where( thynde ye )this generacion shall be appointed. If they come to kyngynges or sondrys. They wyl beate the away in lyke maner husbandmen/marchaunters/ and all other craftes men wyl expue them away fro theyr partes/ bycause they haue not laboured as they haue done. But than what remayneth.

Insayth

of pitties.

Insayfth that suche ( whom euery ordre  
doth forsake and accuse) must be appoynt-  
ed unto a place where is no ordre / But  
euclasyngs fre and trouble . Therefore  
saynt Bernard shewyth in his thrid bo-  
ke calyd (de consideracione) that clerkes  
be out of all ordre / sayng thus . what  
meanyth it that clerkes wylle be of one  
facyon / and yet wylle countyd to be of  
another / for in theyz apparayle they be  
solwarters or rufians in theyz gapnes or  
lure : they are veray clerkes / but in dede  
they appere to be nother / for they syght  
not as solwarters / & theyz techynge and  
conuersacyon is not lyke clerkes / howe  
may we knowe of what ordre they be /  
Whan they wylle be of both ordres / but  
truely they destroy and confund bothe .  
The blyssed apostle sayd thus euery man  
shall aryste in his ordre . In whiche (thyn-  
ke ye ) shall these aryste . whether they  
that haue offcudyd without ordre shall  
perlyfe without ordre . O yf it be suppo-  
sed that the most true / and ryghtwyse  
God wylle forsake ( from the hyghest  
unto the lowlyste ) all them that be  
out of ordre . I feare lest they shall be or-  
dred in no other place but where euclasy-  
ng horroure / fre / & trouble with inhabitez

Forsoth

The lyfe

Forsooth they be not stendly spouses whi  
the feare not to relayne thynges allig-  
ned vnto church to they; owne privat-  
tie and professe. And suche as ought to  
prepare tabernacles in heuen both for  
themself and other / thy procure herein  
the erth houses vpon houses lande vpon  
land / & contrary to the doctryne of Christ  
they mucke vp mony & treasure in this  
world/where as nature is contentid with  
a lyytill. But they do not only leke a ne-  
cessary luying by the goodis of y<sup>e</sup> church  
which they may obayne with small pe-  
ysis/but also they desyre to be honouryd  
they study to please man & not god/to be  
proud & full of pleasure/in every poit to be  
conformable to this world. It is not cha-  
rakte, but a courtesunes that is straunge  
to god/which inducyth al me to gete p<sup>r</sup>p-  
uate honour/ or ryches in substance/ or  
ordres of y<sup>e</sup> church/or els to leke pleasure  
of y<sup>e</sup> body(that is to say)such thyngs as  
be they; & not such thingis as be Christis  
what meane they to be so folc hardye.  
Howe chaunsyth it that they be so mad/  
where is the feare of god/ where is the  
remembraunce of deth/where is the fea-  
re of the paynes of hell / where is the lo-  
kyng for the terrible day of iudgment.

The

of preties.

The spouses cryeth to the heuely spouse  
in this maner. Take me with the / we  
wyll runne in to the sauour of thyne olt-  
mentes . Nowe euery man satyryh his  
owne pleasure / and folouynge the sauour  
of foule lucre / they suppose gaines to be  
goodnes / the damnation of whom is  
rightwyse.

**C** Of the moste straunge and ferrebyle  
iudgement of god vpon clerkes  
had out of the wordes of glo-  
rous saynt Bernard.

**H** Oly salt Bernard spekyth of this  
matter sayeng thus / wo be to the  
beig a clerke / deh is in thy cuppe  
deh is in thy deylte and plesure / forby-  
cause thou eatest & drynkyst the synnes  
of y<sup>e</sup> people (that is to say) thou catchest &  
drynkhest the goodes of the churche offe-  
ryd of the people to purge the from syn-  
ne. Thou tkenyst to haue therewardes  
of the churche for god a mercy. Thou sin-  
gyst for them / but better it were for the  
to begge & labour except by thy iust con-  
uersacyon in all thyngē / thou do satysfy  
god for the offences of thy foundars and  
benefactours. Therfore be thou sad and  
circumspete to do frunce of penaunce to  
the

The lyfe

shed cōdygne teres for theyz offensē as  
though thou shuldyst make accompt for  
them: orclis thou knowyst that the synnys  
of the people( whiche now thou ac-  
countyst among thy plesurys/nothyng  
regardyng them as though they belon-  
gyd not unto the ) wylle be layed to thy  
charge. O the great depnes of the iudige-  
mentes of god/O how terrible is god in  
his counsaylys to the chyldren of men.  
O wretchedis it wylde to late for you to  
say vnto the hilles. Fal ye vpon vs and  
couer vs with downys. For ye shall come  
before the iudycall batte of Christ/and  
the greuous complaynt of the people  
shalbe hard agaynst yow/ the sore accusa-  
tion of thē by whose almes and syppen-  
des ye were susteyned and haue not was-  
hed away the synnys of them to whom  
ye were veray blynd leders and dyscey-  
full medyatours. O thou sole what ple-  
asure syndyst thou than in thy delicyousa-  
nes/how do thy ryches delyte thyne eyes  
wherewith thou hast bought the so let-  
ryble a iugement / soo intollerable and  
eternall ponysshment / & hast bound thy

selfe vnto

of prestes.

selfe vnto so stropie an accempt/ for why  
all that thou hast vnto the last farthyng  
shalbe taken away from the / but nowe  
let regulars marke what the holy anoun-  
ted saynt Bernard(beyng taught by the  
holy ghost)wrote vnto one Falco a wel-  
disposed regular hauyng no more but  
one benefyce / whiche Falco also after-  
ward was made a bishop sayeng thus.  
Thou ryght vpp at vppgylles / thou goyst  
vnto masses / thou vysyt the quere bothe  
in the houris of the nyght and cke of the  
day. This doyeng thou dost well and sa-  
kyft not the prebendes of the churche for  
nothynge/ for it is mete that he that ser-  
uyth the altare do lyue by the altare. I  
wyll he shulde lyue by the altare / but I  
wyll not that he shulde be prouid/lecher-  
ous/ nor ryche/ nor by the goodes of the  
clergye of a pore man to be made a ryche  
man / nor of a meane man to be made a  
gloriosus man. Of the goodes of the  
churche he may buylde hym no great  
palayc no precyous maners/or dwellyn-  
ge houles. Curiously herued/ peyncted/  
or gylded / he may gather no bagges of  
money too gelytere / he maye not

destroy and

### The lyfe

destrope and expend the goodes of the  
poore people in such vayne or superflui-  
tie / he may not exalte or promote his ne-  
uewes / or kyndfolke with the goodes of  
the churche / and I was about to say / he  
shuld not mary his sonnes / or daughters  
therwith / but now let it passe . It is gra-  
tyd unto the ( þt thou serue the altare )  
that thou shalt be susteyned by the altar  
but to the entent that thou shuld by the  
no golden brydels / paynted ladies / syluer  
sporys / lost and fyne futes of chaunge-  
able colours / to be set in ryght appareyl  
and to hange aboule theyr neckys / vpon  
thy handes . Than we muste conclude  
that what soever thou retaynest of the  
goodes of the churche / except necessary  
fode and apparel / it is not thyne / but  
it is theft robbry and facyledge . Alas  
what man in the beginnyng of the esta-  
te of regulars wolde haue thought that  
they wold hane tumblid downe in to so  
great turne . But whan a lityll and a ly-  
tyl man began more grecuously to offend  
so that boldenes had hardened his herte  
in vice without shame / insomuch that he  
keerid it not / than this desperate / vnhap-  
pynes began . For a wycked prest whan  
he comlyd unto the bottome of synne / set  
lyth not

of prelles.

þyth not a paynt therby / nor fearyþ to  
present hymselfe to the face of god/bold-  
ly entryng into the church / as yf it were  
an hōwshold scrūaut/than he goþt into  
the quere/he knylyþ downe and kyssyþ  
the altare with a theuylle mouthe / he  
þynkyþ that he doþ crafteyly/but how  
openly is his iniquyte founþ to his great  
hatered in the syght of god/ so than som  
of them do fall from fornycacyon/ to in-  
cest and aduoutie/but wold to god they  
had not fallen to the affeccyonis of igno-  
mynye/and abhomynable lyuyng. Fur-  
thermore of these regulars holy sayncte  
Bernard wrote many other thynges of  
the amþytyon/and desyre of promotyon  
of clerkes / and how they be asschamed to  
be contentyd with a stattycent pribende  
but evermore they breþe to hygher dyg-  
nyte/ tyll at the last/ they fall downe as  
depe as the dyuel/and no meruayle that  
so cursyd conuersatyon is in the churche  
amonge them constitute in holy ordres/  
for they enter not into them by Christe  
but by symonye / & many other peruerse  
intencyons / sekyng god in pleasure and  
idclnes/ lyuyng in banyte and worldy  
desyre/ not seruynge god in sanctyte and  
iustice / or procedyng to god by a straite

J. or natowe

The lyfe

or narowe wape of heith/hauynge more  
respcete vnto thynges temporall than  
spirituall furdermore as holy saynt Ber-  
nard sayeth. Euer where men tunne  
hedlonge in to holy ordres without any  
seuerence or consideratyon / and yet it is  
a mystery worthy to be honourably my-  
nystred of spirituall angelis. But nowe  
adayes they make men priestes in whom  
auarice reygneth/ambytyon gouernyth  
pryde hath domynacyon / but iniquyte  
and lechery beryth most rule . After this  
facyon they couple & tunne to the dyg-  
nytees and charges of the churche / as  
though they ought to lyue without char-  
ge / whan they come to theyz honoures  
and charges . Truly they do not ponder  
the boundene anncryd vnto the charge/  
nother they do beholde what iudgement  
they stande in . whom veryly( the more  
negligent they be in theyz accompt/ the  
more at lybertye and plesure that they  
lyue)the more intollerable shall theyz da-  
nacyon approche vnto them.

C How they ought to pray/  
syng/ and say the seruyce  
of almyghty god .

Forbycause

of preastes.

**F**orbycause it is the chyfere exynce of  
regulars (or els it ought to be) conti-  
nuallly to be occupied in orysongs &  
praysse to god / and in syngynge theri di-  
uine howres. Therfore we shall breuytly  
touch how god ought to be lawdyd and  
prayed vnto . But in the meane tyme / I  
purpose somwhat to declare howe incel-  
santly and feruently we haue nede to cal  
vpon god. Fyrste it appertyth of the part  
of the place wherin we do dwelle. For ye  
know we inhabyte in this wyked world  
as in a great exyl / in a vale of terys and  
moynynge in a syde fully beseged with  
most cruel crachte and stronge enemyses /  
by whom we be dayly in great perill &  
daunger / for our invisible aduersaries  
do never slepe / but euermore they ley a  
wayte and go aboute to cast vs downe in  
great aduersyte & with them to wrappe  
vs in eternall damnation. And truly we  
be veray brytyl and weke to resist them.  
Therfore aswell of the parte of the place  
as of the parte of y<sup>e</sup> daunger & gynnes in  
whom we be dayly set & cduersaunt & also  
of the parte of our gostly enemyses / we  
haue greate nede to sie vnto God / with  
prayer / and moste affectuouly to despye  
his helpe comfort and defence .

J.II.      Especially

### The lyfe

Especially and forby cause we do dayly &  
everywhere brynging with vs our domestyc  
call aduersary ( that is to say ) our owne  
bodye whiche greuyth our soule depres-  
syth our vnderstandinge / and besydys  
that inducyth a thousand impedymetes  
of spiritual profit. Secondaryly it appe-  
ryth howe feruently it behouyth to pray  
god for a great cause the which we haue  
to do with hym before hand. And this is  
the matter/forby cause we haue despised  
to take eternall damnation. Therfore or  
ryght we ought to serue god / and therby  
to obteyn euerlastyng ioy. And ferther  
yl men so affectuously and lamentably  
de entrete/for the conseruation & defensye  
of this shor t and present corporall lyfe .  
yl also people do so mekely and instatly  
desyre god for worldly prosperite / howe  
much more mickely / and feruently doth  
it become vs to besech the mercy of god  
for escapyng perpetuall damnacion / for  
vertue also to preuayle agaynst all temp-  
tatyonis/for the obteynig of euerlastyng  
helth/for enery gyfte of grace necessarye  
to combye and deserue so great and infla-  
nyng blysse. Thirdly it apperith for that:  
that so oftentymes and so greuously we  
haue offendyd god / and dayly do dyshon-  
our

of prestes.

our hym. Therfore Climacus sayeth  
that by consideracion of them that be gyl-  
ty of dethe/ ye may lerne how ye ought to  
pray vnto god. For yf theues or murther-  
ers beynge taken by a pryncer/or great  
man/ haue ony hope or truste to escape/  
they wyl knele downe before hym whos  
they haue offendyd & with great hum-  
lyte and seruient affectyon desyre pardon  
promysyng to amende and that euer af-  
ter vnto the tyme of dethe they wyl hum-  
ble them selfe and be veray dylygent to  
do that prince or great man veray sayth  
full seruyce / much more we abhomyna-  
ble wretches / whiche tymes innumera-  
ble haue descryed eternall damnacyon /  
ought after the same maner to cal vpon  
god euerlastyng/ which grauntyngh hope  
to them that be penitent and promyseth  
pardon to them that be contrite. Furde-  
more we may ponder a part by god hym  
selfe and by his maieste / howe and after  
what facyon we oughte to pray vnto  
hym. For fyrist yf we cosyder the infynite  
maieste/dignite/holynes/ and honour of  
god most blesyd & gloriouse, we oughte  
to desyre hym of pardon with al reuerence  
subiection/and humlyte. For yf the my-  
nisters of kyngs & prelates in this world

A.iii. do so

### The lyfe

do so meekly/reuerently / & lyke subiectes  
worshyp them/muche more we ought to  
do honour and reverence/ and not with-  
out great humblite & subiection ) unto  
the euerlastyng/ and most incomparabile  
kyng of heuen/ moreouer considerynge  
þe most fauorable goodnes of god behol-  
dnyng vs/we ought to cal vpon his grace  
with a dylgent custodie of hart/ with a  
veray cyrcunspecte attendaunce to pou-  
dre the sense of our wordes/thynkyng vs  
severly to retayne from all vnfruytfull  
bygessyon. Considerynge also the infin-  
te mercy and reward of god/we ought to  
pray vnto hym with great hope and co-  
fidence . And fether in consideracyon of  
godly iustice we ought to pray vnto hym  
with feare & tremblyng/moreouer consi-  
derynge our owne transgessyon & offen-  
ses/we ought to pray vnto hym/with in-  
ward contrition mekely knowledgyng  
our offences/to our great pffet. And tru-  
ly considering our owne necessyte/infy-  
mpte/ & redynes to byss & myschyef/ we  
ought euermore with sore lighyng & la-  
mentacyon to despise his grace of mercy  
for as our sauour hymselfe sayeth . It  
behouyth for to pray and never ceasse.  
Considerynge also our owne small deser-  
wyng we ought louyngly & w<sup>r</sup> great mes-

of preses.

hnes to call vpon god puttynge our only  
seyth hope and trust in his mercy / euyt  
as creatures of veray small and weke  
power . Of these consideracions for the  
most parte it appertyth how attertyly/re  
uerently/distinctly/affectuously/plesauis  
ly to god/ferefully/mckely/purely/et dyp  
scetly we ought to lawde & honour god  
in syngynge . Therfor sayeth saynt Ber  
nard in this wylc . Most welbelouyd bre  
therne/awlays I exhort you/ ye boldy  
ye appere in your diuine seruice / & that  
duely / & reuerently ye resort vnto it/not  
slowly hevily or slegigly not sparly your  
voices whā ye shuld syng/not pnoūcing  
halfe wordes & somtyme eskyppynge the  
hole/not sowning the softly as it were a  
womā that sang thorowgh the nose/but  
to pnoūce such holy & godly wordes w<sup>c</sup>a  
manly brest & affection/with so good dy  
sposytion that ye shuld seeme to imagyne  
or thinke that thing y<sup>e</sup> ye sang/ but alas  
there be many regulares nowe a daies  
in that point foud greatly i defaulte/ for  
they syng to rashely not pawling in the  
middis/nother reuerently nor ferefully sta  
ding lyke good dysapples before god/but  
sone absynting the self fro diuine seruycce  
coming tardie into the quyre/but yet wyl  
go out wyth the syll . I.uu. And

### The lyfe

And howe can they be intentlyly gyuen  
to the sence of such gostly wordes / whan  
they pronounce them so hastyly and indis-  
tinctly / but wolde god that they wolde  
harken to this that is sayed of them .  
Cursyd is that man / that doth the werke  
of god negligently . And also that which  
god spake by the prophet Isaie and whi  
the Christe hymselfe rehersed in the gos-  
spell on this facyon . The people do ho-  
nour me with theyz lyppis / but the hart  
of them is farre from me . what answere  
wyll these people make to the hyghe iud-  
ge / which dylygently haue occupied such  
thynges as perteyned to the fleshe and  
so longe tyme in them haue remayned /  
which ryng late to mattens / & synyshe it  
so quickly pewyn as they do other houres  
They syt also muche longer / at theyz dy-  
uers / suppers / feastes / bakettes / games /  
playes / and dysportes than nature neces-  
site or reson wold requyre . Theyly full  
sone they dispache them selfe from all  
thynges that is godly / and consernyng  
the welth of soules and at all tymes lede  
theyz lvs peruerely . Therfor let them re-  
pent and slake no more the duc tyme of  
the dyuyne seruice of theyz maker / but  
suche princypall and gostly wordis / let them

of prestes.

them more principally dylygently & tymely execute. Furthermore there be some regulars that syng nothyng at all/ notwithstanding they stand in the quyer/ but they comand and compt it to chyldren and other syngers in the quyer.

But that custome semyth to be a corruptyon of religion and no lawe/ and to precede of no humlypte or devotion/but rather of pypd abusyon or hatered / where in tyme past not only the canons of cathedrall churches / but also the prelates themselfe were wont to synge with the quyer. Therefore let them marke what the apostle sayeth. He that labourieth not shal not eate. Is not the benefice or deigned for hym that doth the offyce / or deuteye / for that cause the rentes of the church is due to none / but to such as do execute theyr offyces and labour in diuyne service.

¶ Whether descante may be commendable  
in the dyvynne seruice / and of certayne thynges whiche ought  
to be eschewyd in songe

The xx. Article.

G. vii Lypie

### The lyfe

**L**ike as it is declared in a certayne  
boke namyd/ summa virtutū et vi-  
tiorum / it is greatly reprouid in  
syngynge the dypync serupe to fayne a  
voyce to much quaueryng or warbelyng  
ether for pride/bainglorpe/or pleasure.  
For as saynt Gregorze sayth . whylste  
they fayne warblynge voyces / they les-  
syp all good deuotion / lykewylse in syn-  
gyng diuine serupe ouermuche lowde-  
nes and mountynge of the voyce is nos-  
comendable nor lykewylse the tollyng of  
it/no; also to much swiftnes or to drag-  
ge ouerlong at the lattredede/ þ to skyppe  
over the rest or pausinge in the myddes.  
And spccially when the song is so swyft  
that it is shake all to nought. Moreouer  
a question may be mouyd whither descent  
or brekynge of the voice may lawdably be  
sufferyd in goddes seruice/bþo that in y<sup>e</sup>  
said notable boke of summa it is wryten  
thus. Breakyng of the voice or descante  
semith to be no thyng comendable in y<sup>e</sup>  
diuine seruice/wherupþ it is redde in the  
legend of salt Hebast.that psone is to be  
estemyd no right christian/which is in a  
maner weddid vnto the barbour/ which  
trimeth his bushe/which sekith swete sa-  
nours/þ breakyth his voice/for brekynge  
of the voyce semith to betoken a broken

of prestes.

mynde / eupn as the turnyng s of the hev  
is nothyng condable vnto men/nor the  
great tollys of playtes in the garnetes  
of wome / more is descāt vnto syngers.  
And lyke as the wynde is wonte to reysē  
by great plentie of wavis & surges/eupn  
so the wynd of vanyte is the cause of all  
this quauers & surges in singyng/ these  
thyngs at cōtaynid in the foressaid boke  
of summa / wherby it is pupyd p<sup>t</sup> they  
that vse such maner of singyng/do vitter  
it for nothyng els but for theyz bainglo-  
ry & wātones of mynde which.u.thyngs  
do cōsyst i theyz nyce singig/ for yf it wer  
excusabile or to be cōmedyd for any cause  
it shulde be onlie done for excyting & styr-  
ryng the people vnto deuocion/ for some  
folkyz by reason of suche melodyes / at  
greatly mouyd vnto contēplacyō & deuo-  
cion for whiche cause also organes ar vud  
in the church . whercupon saynt Augus-  
tine sayeth . As often as the songe is  
more delectable vnto me/then the dite/so  
ofte I knowledge that I do synne penal-  
ly/ then had I rather to here no song at  
al/furthermo<sup>r</sup> although that descāt spe-  
cially pouerith some vnto deuociō & heud-  
ly cōtemplacion/ yet for al that it semith  
greatly to reuoke & let some frō p<sup>c</sup> minde  
of theyz owne prayours .

The lyte

For god from whome nothyng vnlawfull doys is hydden dothe nor take after  
the plesauntnes of the voyce/but the pur-  
pyle of harte .

**C**Agynst some that wolde be excusid fro  
the obseruance of such thyngs that  
regularts/are specyally bounden to  
do/sayenge that the dygnyte  
of the church requyreteth  
none other facyon  
then hathe ben  
vsyd in tymes  
passyd.

**D**ivid the maker of psalmis syd  
not w/out cause praye this prayer  
vnto god sayenge . Let not myne  
harte inclyne vnto the wordis of malig-  
nyte / for to inuenire excusis in synne .  
Hurelype this maner of excusyng cau-  
syth many to be vncorrigible & vnruleye .  
Let none therfore excuse hymselfe from  
the obseruance or kepyng of the thyngs  
before spefyed/sayeng . we can not lyue  
nowe a dayes / as our predecessours and  
elders hauelued in tymes passyd/ that  
is to wyte . For to be cōfencyd with ne-  
cessarye

of prestes.

cessarye lyuyng/ syngle araye/ and one  
beueyce. But for the honestye/ and wor-  
thynges of the churche/ we haue nede of  
many moo thynges/ and we muste kepe  
hospytalyte/ and be clothed & fedde/ ac-  
cording to the dygnyte of oure estate/  
degree/ and ordre/ & to mayntayne good  
housholders vnto the whiche maner of  
excusis/ and suche lyke cauyllations/ and  
perswaliouns/ wherby many deceyue the-  
selius and other to/ this aunswere may  
be made. Howe it is conuenient that re-  
ligious persones/ and al other within ho-  
ly orders/ shuld haue theyt lyuing/ theyz  
clothyng/ theyz mayntenancie/ & keppug  
after an honest sorte/ and accordyng to  
the degree that they ar callyd vnto/ and  
as it is conuenyent for theyz degree/ estate  
ordre/ and dygnyte. But wolde god they  
wolde substaunciallye/ and eynlype con-  
sydre/ what belongyth vnto theyz very  
honestie/ and to theyz conuenient appa-  
rall/ and furnyshyng. For whatsoever  
thyng is contrarie vnto vertue/ the same  
is also contrarye vnto the true and com-  
mendable honesty. Forasmuch as good-  
nes & honestye (accordyng to the mynde  
of phylosphers and doctours) callyd so  
bycause of theyz owne nature and pro-  
pertie

The lyfe

vertie they do allure intyse / & cause men  
to desprie them for theyz owne sake / & for  
none other respecte / as wysdom/science  
& vertue / lyke as the phylosopher wrysteth  
in his fyrist boke (de anima) herevpon  
sayth Isodore / that honestie is almuche  
to say as the state of honour / bycause ho-  
nour is due vnto wysdom and vertue / &  
also vnto dignyte: which ought to be sur-  
uyshed with wysdom and vertue / is  
to be whatsoeuer therfore is contrarie  
vnto / wysdom and vertue / & mynde  
vhonest / and contrary vnto the perky-  
tenes of lyuyng . wherfore the honestye  
of spirytual mynystres standith in holyc  
and perkyte humylite : greate pacience:  
myldenes:obedience: charite: all chasty-  
te: diligencce: sobrenes / & gyuyngc good  
example/true Justice/mercye/lyberalite  
and other lyke vertues/ gyftes/ and gra-  
cys of the holy ghoste / in the desppsynge  
of earthly thynges / in the desprie and con-  
templacion of heuenlye thynges / not  
in the excesse / and superfluyte/ costynes/  
curiosite/delycatnes/ and pleasure of ap-  
peteyll/in merte: in dynke/ and in sump-

809

of prestes.

two houses / not in roiall housekepyng  
in multe pleyenge of ryches / and haboun-  
daunce of householdestuffe & other lyke .  
For in such maner of thynges the very  
dygnyte worshyp comlynes and honesty  
of ecclesiastiques doth stande as the Apo-  
stle witnessyth wrytynge unto Tymos-  
thee / that woman shulde praye in conue-  
nyent arraye : meke : symple : and deuoute  
not in costlye : pompous : trymme : and  
ryche apparel : for the most holye Chief-  
tain of chaystles saith : be ye not clo-  
thyd with ryche apparayll / and perlyns .

In this poynte therfore consyesth the  
very honestye and dygnyte of religiouse  
persones and prestes that (asmoch as is  
possyble ) they shall endeuour for to vse  
themselups accordynge to the comau-  
demetes / deccres / tulys / tradycyons / and  
steppys of Christe / chaystles / and holye  
fathers . And so by gyuyng good exam-  
ple / diligencce and / Spirituall conuer-  
sacyon they shall edeyle the Uniteynyd  
people & shalbe a good sauour vntogod /  
and shall gloriyfie god in perkyte lyuyngc

and

### The lyfe

and seruyng hym with all chastite/ sober  
nes/ and diligencie in doyng the diwynne  
seruyce/in simple & necessarye clothynge  
in charyte/deuocion/ & the other vertues  
before touchyd. And in so doyng they  
shall obey / subdue / and conserue them  
selues vnto theyr pypnce / theyr Lorde/  
theyr bishop/theyr master/theyr teacher  
and theyr iudge that is Iesu Christ, for  
in every ordre & degree there is one thig  
whiche is chief and superior, the whiche  
thyng is a rule and a meaſure of thyngs  
more lasse & inferiour, so that the more  
that they be lyke & conforſable to theyr  
hed and superiour/ they ar somuche the  
more perſyte in theyr proper nature & de-  
gree/ and the further that they vary and  
dyffer from it somuch the more unperfis  
they be. Heynge therfore that Christe is  
the fyſte and chief hed meaſure and rule  
of al faithfull people that be of this con-  
gregacion or churche, somuch the more  
at all christen people to be esteemed good  
vertuos, holy/ and honest, in that they  
folowe Chryſte theyr hed in whom was  
all honestye/vertu and goodnes. Ther-  
fore the true honesty of ſpirituall myn-  
tres conſylteth in this poynþe, which is  
to folowe Chriſtes humپlitye, charite/  
iustice

of prestes.

justice/good example/merrye/ sobernes/  
clennes/ accordyng vnto the rulys/ and  
decrees of holye Fathres/ not to fede  
theyz belys delcatelye/ whereby they  
ar prouokyd vnto bodely luste/ not to be  
arrayed in gorgeouſ appareyll. But that  
they shulde be somuch the more vertuous/  
holy/ sober/ chast/ and good/ in respecte  
of the laye people/ as they ar set in more  
hygh estate and dygnite. Moreouer it  
is prouyd by comon experiance & teachyng  
that ſuch religyous persones as ar ver-  
tuous/ and chaste in theyz couuerſacion/ of  
which there is almoſt( the more ppte) as  
great plente as is of whit crowes/ at more  
ſet by/more welbelouyd/much better re-  
garded among the commune people/ then  
at the other sorte. But how ſtraylye the  
ſuperfluyte of goodes/ incōfynence of ly-  
tynge/ and ſumptuouſnes of appareyll/ is  
forbydden vnto clerkys/ is ſufficientlye  
declaryd in the xi. article wherin among  
other thynges it is conteynyd thus. All  
maner of ſtatyng and gorgeouſ appa-  
reyll/ ſhuld not be vſyd among ſpirituall  
persones wherfore it is veray mete that  
ſuch byſhopes and clerkes as cloth them  
ſelues in tym costlye appareyll ſhuld be  
refourmid. For in tyme past ſuch as were

M. of ſpirituall

### The lyfe

of spirituall estate were contentyd with  
sympyle and mean array. Finally the holy  
Apostles followyd the same perisye hong  
lyf of they: As ayster Christ wherof men  
cion is made before/whose example holy  
Bishopes with they: clerkes did alwaies  
follow not only dutynge the persecucion  
of the churche/but also longe syms both  
in the tyme of saynt Gregorie/and also  
of saynt Bernard what syme holy chur-  
che was in much higher/and more glori-  
ous estate then it is nowe/for the blyssed  
fathers before namyd byd most vchement  
ly rebuke mynistrates of the churche for  
they: excesse/superfluite/curoisite/auas-  
tice/s vicyous lyuyng/assyrmynge that  
they at specially bounden to be contynyd  
with symple fare/and symple clothynge/  
and other lyfe vertues as ar spoken of  
before. Therfore let them not excuse the-  
selues from the obscruaunce of such  
thynges/but rather applye themselves  
(asmuch as is possible) vnto vertuos ly-  
uyng which is perfite honesty according  
to p<sup>c</sup> rule that is crystallyd in the begyn-  
nyng of the thyrd boke of deccres.  
And further as they ar coman-  
dyd in the canons of holy fa-  
thers and hyge bishopes.

¶ Of the

of prelates.

¶ Of the danger that is in plurality of  
bischopcs. ¶ we haue so litle declaracions  
syntently / how chaste / how symonous / and  
how sober / all clerkes / religioun / and all  
that be within holy ordre ought for to  
be and to lyke maner holden they at deuine  
deu to eschew all maner of prude / excesse  
and worldly pompe in theyz apparaſtys  
theyz ſtuffe / and theyz houſes / and to be  
contentyd with ſymplicite / and ſymplic  
cloþage / to heare ordeyn of theyw wylle  
obeyre / undoubtably they / myght iſue  
complaintys / wch haſt incatebenefyce / but  
for biſcups they obſcuris not the thynges  
before ſpeſtis but wch haſt ſuppreſtis  
wch the thynges / a ſet of ryches / of godgeons  
appareyllis / of ſumptuous ſtac / and ſuche  
lyke prouy dounis / by þe unto tuleris / and  
þeche men of the worldis / no metuayle  
therfore þe biship produceth haue many  
benefyces / But howe perillous it is to  
haue plurality of benefyces / the true cathe  
cholique / and famous doctores afte  
namptis that is to wryte saynt Thomas /  
wolfram of paris / Raymundus / and  
the authour of the boke callid Humme  
Uirtutum & Uitiorum / and many other  
haue ſuffreytlye declaracions / out of

The lyfe

whiche workis specially I haue gatherid  
this litle treatise agaynst pluraltite of be-  
nefices that now a dayes is every where  
vsyd. But the effecte of theyz myndes es-  
sisteth in this pointe/that suche as haue  
more benefices then one (exepte it be in  
certayne casys) hereafte to be lowched  
by robbc god of his seruice/ do dysmens  
by the church in dymynglyng the in-  
numbre of hir mynisters / do spoyle  
the poore and the ardy of theyz almes /  
the dead soules of theyz suffrages / & ty-  
mally deceyue the good entente of theyz  
foundours and patrones / swypnge ther-  
fore that contrary to the holome coun-  
sel and wctrine of so manys / and solamne  
doctours and holye fathers / they haue a  
conceyte to haue pluraltite of benefices /  
they put themselves in great peryl / and  
to be playnt / for dyng they compeate dead  
lyesynne. Hereupon wyllyam of Paris  
wryteth in this wyse / verely the hauyng  
of spirituall possessions is very daunger-  
ous / whiche ought not to be gauen / but  
only to such as deserue them / for the whi-  
che cause good and holye men haue been  
daungerous to receyue them. And all þ  
myght be saud besydes theyz necessary  
sustenace / they vsyd to distribut unto the  
poore

of prestes.

poore / to the entent they shulde supplye  
theyr defautes in prayng & doyng good  
dedys / wherupon the holy father saynt  
Bernard sayneth / that a clerke hauyng  
suffycient aboue his necessarie chargys/  
and couetyngc to get more / is a church  
robber / and synneth damnable . More-  
over the sayd holy father saynt Bernard  
wrytynge to a certayne regulare that had  
but one benefice howmuch so cuer (sayneth  
he) that thou dost retayne and kepe of y<sup>e</sup>  
goodes of thy churche besydcs a syngle  
and a competent syndyngc for thy seise  
thinkest not thyne owne / but rather that  
it is stolen and robbed out of the church  
what thyng can be spoken more playnly  
or more certeynlye : Dught not he to be  
estempyd blynde & past all grace that wch  
not regarde / ne feare the wordis of these  
holy fathers . Now yf it be so meant / for  
the hauyngc of one benefice / with holwe  
many Thelstys / Robborpes / Bybes-  
ties and Hacrylicc / at they entanglyd/  
the whiche beyngc not content with one  
benefice or two / wyl purchase vnyons/  
pluralites / lotquotes / ye hole hepes of  
benefices . Certaynlye yf acordyngc to  
the mattiers before alleddgyd / all that be  
mdedly sygne / haue no right to y<sup>e</sup> goodes

### The lyfe

of the church/nor yet to y<sup>e</sup> w<sup>r</sup>ke benefices  
that is / then muste it be grauntyd that  
such as haue more benefices then one/ or  
playne thevys and churchedobbers. And  
ysf they alleodge the dispensacion of my  
lorde the Pope/we knowe well ynoch  
that his sacerthod can not dispense with  
couetise/ambition/ prude/and lecherye/  
excepte it be his pleasure to vslutpe vpon  
the law of god/for ys if it shulde be tryed in  
the court of conscience/ or before god . I  
dare boldely saye that his dispensacion  
myght not be allowyd without it were  
some urgent cause/that is/ysf it were don  
ether for very necessite/ or for manyf  
huryde/ which excusyth no man for the  
kepyng of many benefices / nor may be  
lawfully admittid / excepte it be in cer-  
taine casys hereafter to be touchyd .

Morouer by the lawe of god we ought  
not to possesse more tempos/ all goodes/  
then are necessary for vs/hauyng regard  
vnto spypuall gyfcs of grace/ and to  
our saluacion / that is to lyue well / and  
to obtaine the lyfe euerlastyng. But that  
hath one competent benefyce / I wold  
know of hym/ for what cause/what pur-  
pose & to what entent he wolde retayne/  
oreis go about to retayne any more/ for  
syf ther it must be to the entent for to ha-

of prestes.

ne habidance of temporall goodes whi  
che is vntaufull wher one hath a suffi-  
cient lyuyng )oreis for to lyue more spiri-  
tually / and to exercise charitable workis  
and for to growe to further perfection /  
whiche can not come that waye / for the  
goodes that they get by hauring manye  
benefyces causith them to be more vn-  
quiet / and troublyd in mynde / wherby  
they haue great occasion to lyue more  
at pleasure and viciously. Besydes this  
wylliam of Paris / and dyuerse other  
great clerkes do proue dyuers ways that  
whosoever hath pluralyte of benefices  
( except it be in certayne easys hereafter  
to be touchyd) is bounden to saye as ma-  
ny payres of mattynes as he hath bene-  
fices. And so he dothe daylye incurre as  
many deadly synnes / as he leuyth pay-  
ers of mattynes vsayed. The sayd Do-  
ctours also / & many other assy:me / that  
whosoever is in deadly synne / he synneth  
deadly as he procurith to haue spiritual  
goods which ar apoynted for none other  
but for suche as deserue them / howe be it  
there are certayne easys wher it is leful  
to haue more benefices / or prebends then  
one / which after the myndes of doctours  
ar suche as here folowe.

B. ill. The

### The lyfe

The fyre is / where the benefyce is not  
suffycient to fynde one prestis cōpetēt  
sustenaunce and clothyng. The seound  
is / where one benefice is annexyd to ano  
ther. The thyrd is / where there is defaut  
and lache of prestes. The fourth is yf the  
churche be appendat to a prebete / or such  
lyke dygnyle. The fyfth is / yf one haue a  
iuste tytlic to one benefice for a tyme / and  
another in comendam bntyll the effecte of  
the cause do ceasse. Also there maye be  
added the syxte cause / whiche is / yf one  
be in seruice for the cōmune profit of y<sup>e</sup>  
churche as to be a preachour / or in lyke  
office. wherfore according to the premp  
ses / it may be esteemed lightly how much  
is sufficient for the reasonable lyuyng of  
a clerke / yf it be remembryd how they ar  
bounden to lyue chaste / sober / mekely  
moderately : and gyuyng good example.  
Quer this we may lerne by expeirience y<sup>e</sup>  
small reuenues ar sufficient / for suche as  
use the vertues before rchesyd / howbeit  
we do graunte that the greater that a  
clerke is in spirituall estate / the greater  
benefyce he ought to haue. But plurali  
ty of benefices ( excepte it be in the cases  
be fore tolchyd ) is reproynd of all good  
men / as beyng moste daungerous unto  
soule.

of prestes.

Soule helthe/and therfore accordyngē to  
the councel of the doctours before alled-  
gyd)it ought to be eschewyd of al glones  
that entende the chyrstian perfeccyon.

**C**howe prestes and such as ar of the  
clergy/ ar bounden to kepe  
hospitallyc.

**M**ewe agayne there be many  
of the clergyn/ that excuse the  
bauyngē of many benefyces  
with this pretense. It bebo-  
uth vs(saye they)to maynteyn good ho-  
spitalyc/ ye & to make prouision for un-  
bydden gestes. wherfore to auoyde this  
colouryd caupillacyon/ I wyl partly de-  
clare/ unto you what maner of hospitali-  
te they ar bounden/ & that is none other  
but one of the workys of mercie wherof  
Christe sayth in his gospell that he wyll  
put vs in remembraunce at the daye of  
iugement/ and wyll speake in this wise.  
I was a straungier/ & ye woldc not take  
me in. The whiche he speakith in the per-  
sonne of his membris/ and creatures the  
poore & the nedye / and not in the person  
of the riche and the myghty. At this sa-  
enge of our sauour ought all clerycs &  
mynisters of the churche speciallye to  
tremble

The lyfe

scrable and quake whiche have not her-  
borowed nor fed the poore and nedys-  
gars. What wyl they aunswere whiche  
haue ben so negligent of the poore that  
scarsely they can finde in theyr hertes to  
rewaerde them with the fragmentes of  
theyr meate / or to afford them lodgings  
in theyr barnes. But yet they receyue  
great astates / rygh men / & officers / with  
much reverence: they intetayne the with  
moch solemnite / they refrech them delica-  
tely / and lode them in sotte bedoyng.  
Let them here / and amende the seluyss / &  
endeavour to obserue that whiche Christ  
comandith in the gospell: when thou  
makist a feaste sayth he do not cal ther-  
unto thy kynstolkes / nor rygh men / or y<sup>e</sup>  
be in authorite lest they recompense the  
againe for it in this woorlde: but call the  
poore / and the feble / the blynde and the  
lame / & so thou shalt be blesyd / for they  
haue not to reward the / but thou shalt be  
rewacyd / at the resurreccio of the right  
wise. Marke well this plaine sentence /  
In no[n]te holosome councell. Notwith-  
standinge these sayenges ar not so to be  
miseris iden but that spiritual possessio-  
naries may lawfully at some tyme upon a  
relemanie cause grays kepe conuentient  
hospitalite

of priores.

hosptalyte in malysunge thereto they  
kystolke/ and bylyke reson to such as be  
rythe & in authoryte/ so they vse it but sel  
dom/ & without excesse & pompe/ and to a  
goodentent. Leste they do wronng to the  
poore/ & passemesure: furthe more as it  
hath ben repetyd often here before/ the  
possessioun of the churche/ be the patri  
mony of Christ/ the almes of the poore/  
the wages of thescruaunces of god.  
Therefore they ought to be conuertyd to  
suche uses and to none other. For saynt  
Hierom sayth. It is sacrilegious to be  
holwe the goodes of the poore vpon such  
as ar not poore. And in another place.  
They do synne deadly that bestow theyz  
goodes vpon ryche folke/ for they make  
oblaçyon to the devyll. And as it sayde  
before/ for to gyue the goodes of the poore  
to such as ar not poore/ is playne sacrile  
ge/ for the possessions of the churche ar pe  
patrimony of pe poore/ & can not be detey  
ned sed the but by theste/ which is when  
the impulstis of pe church kepe any more  
to them selues then theyz bare lyuyng.  
Therefore( as saynt Hierom sayth) that  
all suche as myuse the goodes of the  
churche/ or that belongyþ/ unto the  
church bellowyng it in suche thynges/  
as make

### The lyfe

as make for theyz awne voluptuosnes &  
pleasure/be lyke unto the scribes & phar-  
isees. They therfore that mocco vpon  
goodes of the churche/ and purchase lan-  
des therwith for to leue unto theyz fren-  
des and kyndelwomen ( I was about to  
have sayed theyz sonnes & theyz dough-  
ters) or that bestowe it vpon dayne and  
worldly hospitalite/ in theyz so dopnge/  
comyse deadly synne as to spend it vpon  
rych men or theyz carnall companyonys/  
for whom they make sumptuos prouisi-  
on/ and can never be mery without such  
gesyng / or if they hap to be callyd by the  
wyl come in all the haste to solace with  
them. Albeit that suche facionys at speccy  
allye forbydden vnto the clergye accord-  
yng vnto the sayeng of Isodore which  
saythe thus. Cleckes ought to eschewe  
feastis not only comune but also secrete/  
and ought to fare meanly in soberenes /  
for al such festyng is peryllo<sup>r</sup> to Christ  
people for it both quencheth deuoerons  
destroyeth true cōfession of hart / & nouc-  
sheth lechery/ and drawith vnto it / ydle  
wordes/ iestynge/ raylyng/ wyldenes/ the  
forgettyng of good werkes and much vn-  
gracious pastyme. And so the feare of  
almyghty god neglectyd and set a parte/

the

of prestes.

the synfull men regarde slenderly bothe  
theyr soule heith. Therefore saynt Johā/  
Chrysostom and suchē holyc men woldē  
nuer be bydden vnto feastes / noxlynes  
wylc wolde byd any other. In considera  
cion wherof ( O ye Christen prestes / and  
true mynisters of the church) these great  
daungerous / often / and delycat feastes.  
Remember well / that a certayne prelate  
that was both ryche and deuoute / meyd  
with remorse of conscience by inspiraciō  
on of God sayd these wordes here folo  
wyng. I am made ryche in goodes / and  
am a beggar in soule. I haue won world  
ly honour and haue loste god . I folowe  
the countes of p̄ynes / and am of cou  
sell with greate estates / and therby am  
bannysched the courte of heuen . what  
shuld I speake of hospitalite / that rather  
ought to be callyd hostylite and moste of  
all pitte be don for daynglorye / & not ra  
ther for the loue of Chyste . For if they  
had so lond for men of ryches or authori  
tie / they receyue them with great honour  
and reverence / and spend on them ryght  
largely of the patrimonye of the crucy  
fice . This is ye hospitalite of this world  
wherby ryche men ar sed sumptuoslye to  
the glory of the dyuell / and Chyste whi  
che is

The lyfe

theis perisse characteris affycted with de  
spisunges / with hunger / with steppes / &  
with nakednes in his poore creatures /  
for so I lyte regarding the terrible iu-  
gements of god do fynd amonge my ghe-  
stis as Balthazar misydynge the goodis  
and the treasure of the poore in the de-  
spys of Christe. Under the colour offas-  
the false hospitayre they make greate  
traffis to men of authorite / & offyce / I  
had al mooste sayd offenders / then is all  
the cheare loste / and greate vngydnes  
taken except one syt with them / and  
kepe compayne in drynkynge / and quaf-  
fyng / yll some of them be as dronke as  
beastes . ¶ The Judgement of suche  
thynges shalbe comynyd bnt bym /  
whose Judgement is secrete and ther-  
fore / the more terrible in aswiche as  
the goodes that they my bestowe at not  
theye owne . But at the almes of the  
poore . Therfore as saynt Hieronim sayth .  
It is great shame that the poore shalde  
be bannished out of the houses of spyp-  
soakmen / and in the stede of thentake  
ruffiers / & waytyng mynyous lyke unto  
temporall prynces .

¶ The oblacions of good people / for  
medy soules . The lyfe of the poore / and  
of the

of prestes.

of the symple: and the exacypong and oppresyons of the poore/whiche rather ought to get theyz bread with the swes of theyz facys/ and not to haue myspendyd the Labours of good people in such vicious pleasures, as in surteynge and drenkynge/to deuoure that other swete for. ¶ He that beholdeth the depences and synglith aboue Cherubyn shall detect mynic the causes of the Poore, / when they shall stande boldely before hym/ agaynste them that haue wronged them and haue consumyd and myspent theyz goodes in evill uscs:and haue bishowyd vpon the ryche men/wherfore they shall haue as great mede:as ys they had castre water into the see. Howe wyl they accomlyshe this sapenge of scripture. He bath dystrybuted and gyuen to y<sup>e</sup> poore. But that prelate whome we alledgyd befor under stode this perfyghtly: for he sayd that hysppitalic which is a dede of charyte ought to be shewyd and don:not for daynglorie/ or any such carnall affectioun: but ought to procede from a good mynd and a vertuous entent. wherfore to conclude accordyng to the p[re]mysses: not only hospitalite but also al other cha-  
ritable dedis & works of mercy as wel bo-  
dily as ghostly

### The lyfe

Ought to be exercysed of spiritual psones  
after theyz abylite lyberallye/ louingly:  
and devoutly/but most of all they ought  
to governe theyz houses dyscretelye/ and  
to coulre theyz housholde seruantes with  
good example gyryngge both in worde &  
dede/ and shulde rebuke suche as offend  
mately and charitably/ vsyng the msel  
ues vnto all men berkynglye/mckely/sos  
bely and iustlye.

**C**wherher religiouse and men of the  
churche that ac able to fynde the  
fenes of theyz owne party-  
mony and substance may  
lawfully conuerte the  
goodz of the churche  
vnto theyz owne  
uses,

**A**cordingyng to the myndes of saynt  
Augustyne & saynt Thomas / not  
onlye the wordys of our Mayster  
Christe but also of other holy fathers/ at  
of suffycient authurite to bynde vs to the  
folowyngē of them wherfore we maye  
much better/ and more surelye giue creden  
ce vnto theyz sayenges/ then the perswa  
sions of certayne schole men that truste  
the

of prestes.

theyz owne wyttes ouermuchy / wrytting  
the authuritez of holyc fathery / vnto  
theyz owne fantasye. And notwithstanding  
wyng that some of them: in the questyon  
before purposyd: alleodge that it may be  
lawfully don. yet I thynke it more wylle  
dom to folow the authurite of saynt Hil-  
ary / saint Bernard & other holy fathers/  
then them. Also Pope Damasus sayth/  
that a clerke which is founden with the  
goodes of his frendes/ yf he take any of  
the church goodes/ doth comytle playne  
sacrefledg. And so doynge he catylyth and  
drynkeheth his damnacion. But yf he ne-  
dyth / & then takylyth / it is rather a gyfte  
then a takyng / but yf he haue no nedes  
takylyth / he shaylyth. Lykewylc p̄spects  
speakylyth in this wyse. I can not well ex-  
preſſe / how great an offence they do com-  
mytte / which when they ar able to haue  
of theyz owne / do charge yf churche wryt-  
theyz finding. And he sayth further that  
holyc men dyd posſeſſe the goodes of the  
churche not as posſeſſioners but as pro-  
curatours / and therfore they pccyuyng  
that the goodes of the churche were none  
other but the gyftes of god / oblacions  
for synnes / & the inheritance of the poore  
they dyd not challenge them as theyz

L.      owne

The syde

plente/but besyowþd hem as thyngs be-  
queþyd to the poore. And dyd not re-  
gard the haþinge of them/but keþte the  
not to hemselfys/but for other/nor dyd  
ndt procure to haue them wþþ any cou-  
tous entitþ/but vpon good sente to hel-  
pe other. So wþþ howe greate reason  
these holy fathers perswade vs/for such  
as ar able to lyue of theyz owne ar not  
accountyd/in the noumber of the poore  
nedy/for whome the goodes of the chur-  
che wer purþed. And therefore it is more  
wyse to inclyne to the myndes of these  
holy fathers/then to such dreamers that  
do not only teach the contrary/but also  
do lyue chartrye. But if they wyl obiecte  
agayne/that the goodes of the churche  
belongt vno the mynisters/;g that they  
ought to vse them as an rewarde of theyz  
seruice. To this it may be aunsweryd/  
that they ar the goodes of none other/but  
of such as nede them/for þt the myn-  
isters of the churche haue suffcyent of  
theyz owne/and for all that wþll employ  
them to theyz owne uses/it is damnable  
and therfore they shulde be spent vpon  
the poore/and the nedy for inasmuche  
as temporall thynges ought to be vþyd  
in chartyas

of prestes.

in charitable and ghostly workys: they  
shulde not bestow temporall good; other  
wyse then spirituall/that is when they  
be consumyd superfluously / where there  
is no nede / lyke as one that is hote of  
body and lusty hath no nede of a physi-  
cion/ but rather suche a one as is sycke  
tuyll at ease. wherfore those clerkes that  
be ryche haue no wronge / though they  
lacke the profites of theyr temporall  
ties/ for therby they myryte the heupnly  
rewardes and gyftes of grace/ which at  
thousand tynes more to be desyred then  
temporall thynges. And fynally it apper-  
yth by the authorites here allcdgyd in  
howe greate peryll they ar/ whiche ha-  
uynge sufficient of theyr propre goodes  
wyll maynteyne themselups with bene-  
fices of the church/ spendyng all vpon  
theyr kyndesse/ which after theyr degre  
ar able to lyeue well knough. And contra-  
rie wyse they ar in as greate peryll that  
consume both patrimony and benefices  
raptoously/and in carnal liuyng. And con-  
sequently these two articles do agree  
with the sayenge of the famous Clerke  
maister Johan Groot.

### The lyfe

No goodes of the churche(sayth he) can  
be spend in feasting and bankettes to ry-  
che men/but with deadly synne/ for they  
are apointed to the poore and at Christes  
patrimonie/and purchasyd for vs by the  
passion of Christe/to our inheritaunce/  
wherefore we can not lawfully gyue the  
to our owne frendes & knyffolke, onles  
they be poore and nede/ and that must be  
don only for Chyfles sake.

What maner of man a prelate/deane/  
or any heed ruler or regulars  
ought to be.

I tis vntersally knownen to be true/  
as holy Dionisius techyth. That in  
euery estate/degree & ordre the chyf  
or heed/ought to be at y<sup>e</sup> syne of his cal-  
lyng of so great perfection/ that with y<sup>e</sup>  
abundance of his spirituall riches & ver-  
tue/he myght inflame/ clence/& illumyn-  
nate/such as be vnder hym & cause to ly-  
ue accordyng to the ordre & estate that  
they be callyd vnto. Therfor it appertyth  
that a dcane/or heed ruler/ ought especy-  
ally to be fulillyd with al maner of ver-  
tuous excrcise & obedience/ that( as it is  
sayd to apperteyne to regulars/to y<sup>e</sup> en-  
tent that he may be an exaple / to all his  
regulars

of prestes.

regulars & other cōmytyd to his gouernance/ and that he may religiously exhorte them/ ledyng them the ryght way to the effecte of theyr ordre/ both openly and secretly informyng them with vertue/dyscretly correctinge suche as wolde forsake theyr ordre/ & also þt he may cause the seruice of god to be dewly kept & performed in the quypre/ and that al fables & wyldnes may be eschewyd as wel in the quypre/ as thoroewe all the churche in the tyme of diuine seruice. Nether he shal suffer any þt be vnder his obedicēce to play the wantons: or to speke any incōuenyēt wordes. He must be ful of good example at all tymes/ þt at the table( as moche as he can) muste forbyd the eaters to vse any unlawfull cōmunicacion he muste question with them of suche thynges as wyl byld them in vertue/ abhorryng all wordes inordinate/studiyng & procuryng with all his dylygens that theyr diuine seruyce be holcely/dyscretly/deuoutely & reuertently performed and ended/ geuyng them crāple in compyngg ostentymies before them to theyr regular houres or seruyce. Furdermore(to his power)he must exquisitly procure/ kepe and increase/the welth of his church especially in spiritu

L. iii.      all thynges

The lyfe

All thyngs / evermore scrivenly prayeng  
vnto almyghty god for them that be co-  
myttyd vnto hym; to the ente that such  
thyng as he can not fulfyl or obteigne by  
rebuke or correccio he may obteigne by  
prayer / keping alwaies an honest meane  
bothe in his apparaile & also in his fare  
lee hym gladly prepare hymselfe contynu-  
ally to mynystre and celebraz. But dely-  
gently lee hym beware that he geue no  
evil occasion to any man by medineney,  
or skaundre / or any other mane of wyse  
not only beyng chaste and sobre / but also  
the exāple of chastite and sobernes / and  
setther the greater nomber that he must  
accōpt for vnto almyghty god / the more  
miche ferefull & deuoute he ought to kepe  
hymselfe. And he that hath nedē of much  
grace & fauour how much necessary is it/  
that he be ful of mekeenes and humyltye;  
howe incessantly ought the to embrase  
our saupour Chyste. And conueniently  
to shew hym selfe before god & man both  
in his wordes apparaile goyng lyupng  
and all his actes / pryde / ambysyon / haine  
glory / and auarice haue blyd to flatne  
out rulees & plates of the church except  
they were well groundyd & establisched in  
the feare of god & deuoute exercysse.

of p[ri]estes.

In lyke maner where p[ri]estes were wont  
to be mehe and genet[er]e now adapes they  
be comunly proude and malicous. And  
some of them for ffre or fauour of man  
or for some byte tolyd in them felse wyll  
nothyng regard to fulfyl the correctyng  
of thy[ur] predecessours wherunto they be  
bounde as well of thatpte as of dewe in  
vice but they loke more for theyr owne  
honour & private profit than for the ho-  
nor of god or welth of mas soule where  
in yf they ons wallow they do noth[er] re-  
gard the spiritual felycite of thy[ur] subiec-  
tes nor yet of them selfe but blynded w[th]  
ambition and couetyse they sail hedlong  
into the depe dungynne of vice . Hereof  
saynt Bernard in his boke de Considera-  
tione vnytyth to pope Eugenius in this  
wyse . Thou being a man shalt not despyce  
to haue domynacyon ouer another man  
lest al vnyghtwysnes haue dominacion  
ouer the . For no payson nor yet ponythe-  
ment ought to be more feryd of the than  
the desyre or plesure or domynacō wher-  
upon saynt Gregorij saþeth thus . The  
mynd of mas is proude pnough of it selfe  
þe although it be incoraged w[th] no power  
or shewynesse than much rather a man  
wyll loke aloft wh[er] p[ri]estes met is geuen

### The lyfe

For truly as oftentimes as any prelate  
deleterieth to be a master & ruler ouer men  
so oft he fallieth in to the synne of apostasie.  
And who so delyterth in this world to  
haue prehempnence/he shall not delypte to  
beholde his iudge Christe. This folysþ he  
þyrd a prelate myght lone overcome/þ  
wysely profoundly & oftentimes he wold  
beholde and ponder y<sup>e</sup> terrible rigour of  
goddes iudgement/ especially concernynge  
prelates the extreme sharpenes of infi-  
nall punishment/ & also the great negli-  
gence of theyr owne lyfe. So a prelate  
shall repute his dignite as it were a peyn-  
full bourden / & not as it were a þyrd &  
honour/ & shalbe careful before god yf he  
marke the wordes of the apostle/ whiche  
be these. It is a fereful thyng to fall into  
the handes of god lyuyng/ rember ther  
forc how enorme & damnable it is to gete  
any temporal comodyte or honoures by  
prelaciehip & not to fulfyll theyr deute of-  
fices / nor yet to behauie the lyke worthy  
yeartes of god.

**A**gainst theyr þyrd in buyldyng  
**S**tynge (as Ulrichs declarith in his  
booke callid **Hymma**) that clerkes  
do make treasour of lufe substance  
as remayneth besydes theyr necessary &  
competent

of p[ri]ester.

competent luyng / other expendyng if to  
vnlawful vses/as in makynge rych they  
fende; or kyngfolke/ or other fylthy glos-  
nes waltyng & consuminge theyr money  
in gorgeous & delicate fare/getynge the  
fame of the worlde by great expensis/as  
geyng liberal rewards to gestours or  
mynstrels/ bycng in the fauour or frend-  
shyp of stiche & noble men entreasynge a  
superfluous household of seruautes whi-  
che ofteynmes must be renewyd with co-  
stly apparaile or framig great curios &  
sumptuous buyldynge; / or els in such o-  
ther lyke vses do prodigally expend the  
patronymy of Christ: me thynke in so di-  
png they do not only offend i the synne of  
prodigalite as every man doth that abus-  
yth that thyng to his owne vse/ whiche  
is comyng to hym with charge/ but al-  
so they make theyr offence more greeuo-  
forbycause they do stie away so expen-  
dyd from the that be the betay owners  
therof(that is to say )the poore people.  
Savnt Hierom calleth this synne a rob-  
bry exceeding al cruelty of theys: oreis a  
sacrilege or church robbry/ furthermore  
savnt Augustin calleth it playnly man-  
staunthe/sayeng thus. whosocuer immo-  
berately reserueth to his owne use good;

Chas

L.v. by god

The lyfe

By god dedicate unto the poore / is gylt,  
of the daughter of so many men / as haue  
ben pore & dyed in theyr houses for hun-  
gre. These regulares therfore are bounde  
to restitucion of al such thyngs. Such also  
as unworlily haue receyvd any goodys  
of the churche are bound to restitucion as  
houes haliattes & bawdes & other sylthy  
persones of euill demeour. Of these  
thynges spekyth vtricu whos wordes  
in the treatyse agaynst pluralites of be-  
nefices more playnly do appere. More-  
ouer agaynst pryde in buyldynge certayne  
thynges be rehersed in his boke callyd  
Summa virtutum et viciorum / in this  
maner. In buyldynge fyue thynges be not  
to be comendyd. The fyrist is the multy-  
tude of houses / and that agreeith wþth  
the sayeng of the prophet Isaie in the v.  
chapitre sayeng thus : wo may you be  
which iogn to gether house vpon house  
Offenders be in the same case whiche fo-  
low not Christe sayeng thus. The sonne  
of man hath no place wherre he may  
put his hed. The second thyng not to be  
comendyd in buyldynge is the greatness  
sumptuousnes and pleasauntnes therof.  
The pleasauntnes truly is dyscernyd in  
decoulours and pictures therof. Otheria  
also

of prestes.

also it is spoken in the .xxiiii. chapter of  
the prophet Jeremie. If dedmore saynt  
paule the fyre heremyc beynge vespich.  
of y<sup>e</sup> holy father Anthouarp askeid a que-  
styon whether chyisten men shuld follow  
the facyon of the gentylis in theyr sumptu-  
tuous buyldynge or no: and he harde say  
that ye. Then greatly he bewaistyd that  
vanycie considerynge hit was the part of  
a chyisten man to say on this facyon. we  
haue no dwellyng place in thys worlde  
but we do loke for a place in tyme to cum.  
Therefore whatsoeuer regulars or mynyp-  
hetes of the churche do immoderately ex-  
pend in such sumptuous buyldynges it  
is cruell robbry and sacrilidge as byfor  
is sayde and also theyr are bound to resti-  
tucyon whiche restitucion is to be done  
vnto poore people but for all that there  
be many nowe adayes whiche out of all  
good ordre and facyon do exceede in such  
sumptuous and costly buyldynges.

**C** Of certayne quincyent lawes to se  
uoyde pluraalites of benefices vpon  
whome no dysponsacion fallyth  
as touchyng to that is in  
them of the lawe  
naturlall,

By the

The lyfe

**B**y the meanes of large lyberal & un-  
reasonable dispesacions y<sup>e</sup> church  
is brought to great confusion/and  
surely in tyme past holy & fereful popes &  
bysshops dyd innowyse admyst but euer-  
more prophybyte pluralites of benefyces  
which now adapes ewerywhere be graff-  
ed to one particular person/ye & often-  
tymes to hym that neither by his couer-  
sation or lernyng is worthy to haue one  
Therefore pope v<sup>r</sup>bane dyd institute that  
it shulde not be lawfull to any man to be  
inducte in to.u.churches but ewery man  
to be regular & residet in one church only  
wherin he is inducte. Another instituci-  
on also is cōteigned in the decretals/ and  
that is this. A clerke fro this p̄sent tyme  
shall not be nombryd in.u.churches/for  
that is but a comodyte of marchaudeyse:  
or soule lucte/and the thyng that is most  
fere from the good ordre of the churche  
wherupon the decreee of pop<sup>r</sup> Gregori is  
thus. we comand that al benefyces of y<sup>e</sup>  
church be comyttd particulerly to par-  
ticuler ysons. Furdermore sait Bernard  
alleged as sait Thomas dyd sayēg th<sup>r</sup>  
One yson is not one/but many respect  
of benefyces/therfor they shalbe many in  
respect of they<sup>r</sup> ponyfhemēt for they<sup>r</sup> of-  
fence

of prestes.

fence is greuous. Moreover & as here  
folowith. I wyl that who so fortune to  
rede this shall knowe that I (frō the in-  
carnation of our lord god. 1437.) was  
at Paris/ where the honourable myllia  
bishop there/ made a conuacion of al y<sup>c</sup>  
maisters of the church/ where a question  
was putforth of pluralite of benefices/ &  
by long & discrete disputacib it was app-  
uyd/that ii. benefices wherof the one did  
amount vnto the value of. xv. pounds of  
paryle myght not be kept to p<sup>c</sup> welthe of  
mānes soule/ & that this bishop of whom  
we speke before w<sup>c</sup> many other dictours  
dyd fynally detemayne. And this thyng  
is more plaiily rehersed i the werke made  
against platalites of benefices/ as tou-  
cbynge this matter pope Gregorii p<sup>c</sup>. i.  
beyng examyned whether by his powre  
he myght dispēse with pluralite of bene-  
fices o; no/ he answeryd & sayd, I can dy-  
speke for nothyng of pluralites but only  
for the ponyshment of such as kepe many  
benefices/ & therfor let no man creope p<sup>c</sup>  
any man hath w<sup>c</sup> hym dispensid for it is  
but in bayne/ but bothe the law of god &  
the lawe of nature is/ that noman ought  
to couepte or procure any more temporall  
goodes than is expediet to vertuous lyfe  
or bathe

& than tho  
of y<sup>c</sup> boke of  
bees sayd.

The lyfe

of hathe respecte to spreytuall comedies  
or vteyn saluarpon. All these thynges  
which I haue I do brenely touch be mois  
or large conteyned in the boke agaynsie  
plutalpe of benefices. And verly we  
dughte muche rather to gyue credaunte  
vnto holy ferfull & famous doctours  
to good religiouse and wcl disposed peo-  
ple (whome before we haue named for  
wicchess) than to siche as haue li bene  
spcces of mo/holwe cunnyng so euer they  
seme to be. For in theyr owne mattes  
they shay gyue an evill iudgment as it  
apperteyneth by this proverbe. Loue and  
hatred subverteth every iudgement.

An exhortacion unto clerkes

**T**he holy and molte deuoute father  
Barnard sayeth as here fol-  
loweth. Let clerkes see let maysters &  
prelates of y<sup>e</sup> church seye whiche behauis  
them selfe so wyckedly in laudes of holp  
fathers wherin they dwell / nat beynge  
concernyd with a competent appynd of  
havyng that myght suffys them but cur-  
syl & theysmly procuring & releyning  
superfluous possessions where with the  
pore people shulde be susteyned/ and the  
same expendyng into theyr owne cat-  
nall & dayne vse/offendyng with double  
iniquite/ for they do bothe spoyle other

of prestes.

men of theyr goodes/ and also abuse the  
holyn and spirituall goodes & substance  
in theyr fylth and vanite. Favour ther  
seche pc/ fauour your seluys / tauoue the  
blode that was shed for your salvacion,  
Beware of the horryble perill and lawke  
get of hell declyne from the euclasyng  
fyre that is preparyd for you. More  
lament ye in the myddys of Baptis  
that is to say in thys wretched world  
and sauue your soules / flee to the spicles  
of spirituall refreschig p<sup>c</sup> is/ to heray hel-  
gious cloystres thatye may do penitencie  
for your synnys past that ye may ob-  
ayne grace in thys present lyfe. Be not  
slacke to knowledge your synnes/ for where  
is abundance of iniquite there hathe  
grace nede to be abundant. See nat the  
sharpenes of penitice greue you / for the  
penitice of this world be nat abdyng ne  
able to couterapple our offences before  
regmytied. Therfore in conclusyon d.  
Wernard sayth. If regulers & other con-  
stituti<sup>r</sup> i holy ordres be nadredd to entres  
into religioun/ it shalbe sufficient for the  
duely ly walke & be couersafte according  
to the effecte wherunto they be callyd/ or  
els affect the forme and ordre to them  
publyshed expoundyd and commaun-  
dyd in the thyrdc boke of Decretalles

The lyte

Let them also consider the vncertente / & m  
erit of subtile / of this present lyfe / the tri-  
testable fytunes of sygne / the fauor and  
mercy of goddes maiestie / y<sup>e</sup> frownes of  
sygne that god to vs hath enlaged / & p-  
rede not unfruitfully xp<sup>e</sup> dyd . Let vs  
loue also hōw scerful our iudgements is / &  
and howe sharpe & intollerable the iug-  
mentall peyne hem is to us / & as god for  
byd that we shuld so do / we let our lyfes  
carnalite and neglygēce . Therfor every  
day let them examynē theyr conuersaces  
remember the calme that they may go by  
a narrow stapt way unto saluation : let  
them fterfullie use the goodes of the chur-  
che / beynge euermore conuersant in cha-  
ritie / goodness / reuolution . And goodes am-  
ple unto the tyng the charite of this pres-  
ent lyfe be contynyd than by the mercy  
of god wch be brought unto the most blis-  
syd frond of euerrayng felicite & joye  
of hem in the great lande & people of god  
omnipotent whiche is the moile dyng  
blessed above all thynges . Amen .

M. Imp̄yntyd at London in the  
fletestrete / by me Robert Red-  
man : Cum pr̄tutlegio .

